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Soviet Armenians Demand Return of Gharabagh Region

Petition Sent to Gorbachev

46050003 *Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian*
26 Jan 88 pp 1, 4

[Text] Several reports appeared recently in the foreign press and the Armenian press of the diaspora about the formation of a Soviet Armenian movement which seeks the merger of the Gharabagh and Nakhichevan regions with Soviet Armenia. Gharabagh is part of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic.

Today's edition of TERCUMAN refers to those reports and says that Gorbachev's policy of "openness" has emboldened the Armenians who published a letter in GLASNOST, a paper published in Moscow, demanding from Azerbaijan the return of Gharabagh which was transferred to Azerbaijan at the insistence of the Turks.

The Armenians sent to Gorbachev a petition carrying 75,000 signatures recalling that after the Bolshevik revolution the mountainous region of Gharabagh, Zanketur and Nakhichevan were officially recognized as Armenian territories. The petition says that this decision remained only on paper because of pressuring from Turkey and that Turkey wanted to Turkify the Armenian lands. The petition adds that today virtually no Armenians remain in Nakhichevan while Armenian monuments are barbarically destroyed and, in contrast, Turkish villages are established on the Turkish-Soviet border at Turkey's instigation.

In their petition to Gorbachev, the Armenians demand the return of the said territories to Soviet Armenia in the name of justice and Lenin's legacy.

Stalin Period Recalled

TERCUMAN recalls that during the Stalin period the Soviet Union made certain demands with regard to Kars and Ardahan. The paper says: "While Stalin talked about the Turkish Straits, he demanded the annexation of Kars and Ardahan to Soviet Georgia and Armenia through

statements by two Georgian professors. At the time, the Holy Church of Echmiadzin in Soviet Armenia also launched a campaign for the same purpose. Meanwhile, some Turkish-Armenians controlled by the Turkish Communist Party illegally propagated those claims in our country.

"Similarly, today Gorbachev has raised an issue of Armenian demands while repressing the Turkish-Islamic republics in the Soviet Union. This indicates that pressure will be applied on Azerbaijan. Given that the issue has been raised by the Armenian Communist Party and has been echoed in the government controlled paper, GLASNOST, it can easily be concluded that the Stalinist strategy is being restaged."

Mikoyan on Gharabagh Question

46050003 *Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian*
4 Feb 88 pp 1, 4

[Text] Sergei Mikoyan, the son of former Soviet leader Anastas Mikoyan, recently visited the United States to participate in a seminar marking the Soviet decision to base nuclear missiles in Cuba 25 years ago.

In Boston, the Armenian weekly, BAYKAR, had an interview with Sergei Mikoyan who spoke about the question of Gharabagh and Nakhichevan. Mikoyan did not express any optimism with regard to Nakhichevan. He said that the decline of the Armenian population of Nakhichevan over the years as a result of various negative factors makes the return of Nakhichevan to Armenia impossible. He added, however, that the same argument does not apply to Gharabagh. Mikoyan said that the issue of merging Gharabagh with Armenia may be raised in the current Gorbachevian environment of openness. He added that work is already under way to create a favorable public opinion. Mikoyan also talked about the worrisome issue of air pollution in Yerevan.

Sergei Mikoyan is a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. He holds a doctorate in history.

9588

REGIONAL

Unified Islamic Curriculum Aims To Unify All Muslims

44040111 Mecca AL-RABITAH in Arabic
Jan/Feb 88 pp 10-12

[Article by Muhammad al-'Abbasi]

[Text] The Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture [ISESCO] convened a conference in Cairo from 3-5 Rabi' al-Awwal 1408 A.H., which coincides with 26-28 October 1987, to unify curricula for Islamic history and geography. ISESCO functions for the purpose of educating and shaping Muslims' minds by utilizing the complete and unified curriculum of the Holy Koran and the prophetic tradition, God's blessing upon the nation of Islam. ISESCO convened this conference after preparations for the unified Islamic Education Curriculum were completed. Making that curriculum generally available to ISESCO countries would be the first step toward Islamic solidarity and the unity of Muslims.

The meeting was chaired by His Excellency Mr 'Abd-al-Hadi Abu Talib, director general of ISESCO. The opening ceremony was attended by Dr Ahmad Fathi Surur, Egypt's minister of education; by His Eminence al-Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, the shaykh of al-Azhar; and by the ambassadors of Islamic countries in Cairo.

Forty experts from the 28 countries who are members of the organization participated in the meeting. These countries are: Jordan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Brunei, Bangladesh, Chad, Sudan, Tunisia, the Comoros Islands, Sierra Leone, the Senegal, Somalia, Iraq, Oman, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Gambia, Palestine, Qatar, Mali, Malaysia, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, the Yemen Arab [Republic], and Egypt.

Unity of Thought and Spirit

In his opening remarks Mr 'Abd-al-Hadi Abu Talib declared that political solidarity and economic cooperation within the Islamic nation can only be achieved by establishing a foundation of intellectual and spiritual unity among Muslims who must get to know each other on a constructive basis. Mr Abu Talib pointed out that in their present state Islamic history and geography syllabi in the school curricula of member countries could not establish such a coherent foundation of thought because the manner in which history and geography are presented is influenced by the European thinking we inherited from the old colonialism.

Mr Abu Talib then touched upon the procedural and pedagogical particulars of the draft proposals for the two unified syllabi, and he expressed the hope that the

assembled experts will be able to develop their proposals and come up with a final version for the two syllabi so that ISESCO can be guided by them in making preparations for model textbooks.

Securing the Islamic Aspect of Our Identity

Dr Ahmad Fathi Surur, Egypt's minister of education, emphasized in his address the extreme importance of this meeting whose aim is to secure the Islamic aspect of our identity and our being by means of history and geography courses. Securing the Islamic aspect of our identity would improve the standing of the Islamic nation in the international community, and that is especially significant now in the age of blocs we are living in. Dr Surur called attention to the procedural and pedagogical particulars which characterize the draft proposals for unifying the Islamic history and geography syllabi, which are being considered at this meeting.

Dr Surur affirmed Egypt's support for ISESCO and the benefits it is receiving from the outcome of this meeting. Egypt's Ministry of Education is presently involved in implementing a comprehensive plan to develop education in Egypt.

The Goals of the Unified Curriculum Project

Mr Ahmad 'Ali Diyaw, ISESCO's assistant director general, spoke about the goals of the history and geography curriculum draft proposal. "The aim of the history syllabus is to offer a model syllabus that would help incorporate Islamic history into the various national curricula without separating Islamic history from world history. The draft proposal also removes conflicts with essential choices adopted by member countries. Such choices may be dictated by the political wishes of those countries or by the given facts which are characteristic of their makeup or circumstances. The draft proposal tries to stay away from everything that could contradict the legitimate, national or regional aspirations of the member countries.

"This approach supports strengthening the methods of teaching Islamic unity and adopts a modern concept of geography and history throughout the Islamic world. It is also aimed at formulating a common syllabus that would promote the notion of shared knowledge and Islamic cooperation and not crumble and fade under the control of foreign books. The draft proposal is also aimed at complementing, not abolishing, the syllabi which are now in use in the member countries.

"In considering ISESCO's proposal for a unified Islamic history syllabus, we find that the proposal does not deal with history as concepts and incidents which happened in the past. ISESCO's proposal is rather aimed at shaping an Islamic awareness of history and an Islamic way of thinking which our rising young generations can use to grasp the significance of past events and their relationship with present problems and future requirements.

Going back to understand all the human implications of Islamic history is extremely necessary because that would guarantee us that future generations in the various Islamic countries will have the proper historical contexts of Islamic historical thought for bringing them closer together. Scientific efforts to rewrite national history in each one of our countries are to focus on that approach.

"The new syllabus, which is being studied by committees, is aimed at providing the appropriate space for the Islamic side of our identity while conforming to the requirements of this age, the age of blocs. In this regard, there is no conflict between the Islamic view and the national one. The syllabus is distinguished by the fact that it develops among students a sense of history by completing a set of mental processes which are associated with the nature of experiencing history. We have to go beyond the narrative and moral style [of teaching history] and adopt modern pedagogical methods which rely on consulting references and utilizing verification techniques, data analysis and interpretation, as well as comments and critical remarks on the data. This is what was done in the unified syllabus.

"In the geography syllabus the general theoretical framework of geography has been shown and brought out, and the extent to which that framework manifests itself in the Islamic world, confirming the cohesion and solidarity of the Islamic nation, has also been brought out. The syllabus shows and brings out the role Muslims played in utilizing the resources of their environment. This makes it clear to students that Muslims can use the reason which God gave them to benefit significantly from their environment and to protect it and develop it as well. It shows students that Muslims can keep up with change, which is important in society, as long as the change remains compatible with Islam. In teaching students about some geographical phenomena, the geography syllabus cites verses from the Holy Koran as often as possible to point out and to show the Creator's power and greatness. The syllabus also points out the importance of the social and cultural approach in understanding and comprehending the geography of the Islamic nation."

Recommendations

At the end of its discussions to unify the history and geography syllabi the conference issued 10 recommendations which included one recommending that ISESCO members make the syllabus generally available to member countries so they can become accustomed to it and adopt as much of it as possible in constructing, modifying, or developing their own history and geography courses.

The conference called upon ISESCO to see to it that model reference books which conform to these two approaches are written and backed up by instruction

books and study guides. The conference called for training courses to be held for supervisors who are responsible for providing the preparation, training, or guidance for history and geography teachers in Islamic countries. The conference called upon ISESCO to encourage research and original writing in these two subjects. It called upon ISESCO to encourage teaching history and geography from an Islamic perspective so that an Islamic awareness of history and geography can be developed.

The conference also recommended that ISESCO and the member countries prepare and publish educational books for children as well as books for general reading which simplify the concepts of Islamic history and the Islamic world's geography in accordance with scientific and educational standards. The conference also recommended that reference books containing sufficient information about the Islamic world and its geography be prepared and published for children and young people.

The conference recommended that a geographical and a historical atlas of the countries of the Islamic world be prepared.

The conference recommended that various educational devices, such as statistical data, pictures, relief maps, recordings, and movies, were to be used to bring the cultural characteristics of Islamic countries closer to students' minds. Such devices would give students a clear idea of the kind of life these people lead and the different standards of living they have.

The conference also recommended that ISESCO organize and encourage an exchange program among people employed in teaching history and geography. ISESCO should encourage the teachers' visits to the organization, and it should make it easy for them to share geography and history syllabi among each other.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had presented a draft resolution whose aim was to outline a strategy for teaching the humanities from an Islamic perspective. This was done at the 15th Islamic Conference for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which was held in San'a' in 1405 A.H. (1985 A.D.). In accordance with this recommendation, which was approved by the Second General Conference for Ministers of Education in Islamic Countries held in Islamabad in September 1985 (1405 A.H.), ISESCO formed a committee and charged it with the task of outlining a plan for a unified curriculum for teaching history and geography to students of the elementary and secondary schools. That is what was discussed in Cairo, and the recommendations which were made there had to do with that.

ALGERIA

UNFA Official Discusses Family Planning Policies

45190032 Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French
28 Jan 88 p 17

[Interview with Mrs Aicha Barki, national secretary of the National Union of Algerian Women, by Genia Bou-taleb; date and place not given]

[Text] The population explosion is of a certainty a cultural phenomenon. This explains why a discussion of its natural counterpart, the spacing of births, is beginning, rather timidly it must be admitted. Here is just one of the one thousand and one possible approaches.

[Question] For 10 or so years now, our population growth rate, which is among the highest in the world, has been at the heart of the discussion about development. Lectures, seminars and studies have been devoted to it. What has changed now?

[Answer] The problem of family planning has always been a taboo subject in Muslim countries. But today, we have succeeded in getting recognition that it is a crucial problem here. The problem is being discussed in public meetings in the most remote corners of the country. In this connection, the party has played a decisive role. Today the ministers speak publicly about contraceptive coils, the pill, and condoms. This is very important.

I myself come from the interior of the country. A few years ago, it would almost have been necessary to hold a family council of state to discuss the desirability of spacing births. Today it is each couple's problem. It is no longer shameful to talk about it.

[Question] What role falls to the UNFA in family planning, and to what extent has this organization taken it up?

[Answer] For 20 years now the UNFA has been studying the problem, but we are only a party body, a political organization which can only pass on the message and educate the masses it represents. Wherever there are more than 10 women together—in a business, an educational institution, a neighborhood or a village—a UNFA body can be established. The choice of officials capable of taking the initiative in establishing cells and motivating them is decisive in this connection.

During the vaccination and child-care campaigns, birth control was discussed with women in even the most remote communities, in language they could understand. We do not talk to them about the problems of state, but about their family units, about the need to organize so that they can live better, in better health.

But while it is perhaps easier for women to talk to women, it must not be forgotten that family planning is not exclusively a women's problem, as, moreover, the Arab term "el wiladet" (literally, children's womb) would make it seem. It is necessary to stop blaming the women exclusively. Rather than birth spacing, for which the Arabic term pertains solely to the mother (and the secretary general has prohibited its use in all the documents), we would prefer to speak of family planning, which more nearly suggests that everyone is involved. It is, in fact, a national problem. This is why we saw the need to organize the first national conference (Club des Pins, 9-10 January) devoted to this theme on a multidisciplinary basis. Each individual must accept his role and his responsibilities.

[Question] What was the main goal of the UNFA in organizing this conference?

[Answer] The main goal was to assess what has been done and to establish the directions and means for better mastery of population growth. Almost 500 individuals participated in the work of this conference. The representatives (five per wilaya) of the UNFA and the other mass organizations made up about half of the total. The other participants included representatives of the various ministries involved (Religious Affairs, National Education, Social Protection and Health), eminent specialists in each discipline and representatives of the various media.

It would perhaps have been desirable for the Ministry of Health, which plays a decisive role, to take the initiative and the responsibility for such a gathering. In fact, the participants repeatedly emphasized that consciousness raising and information cannot play an effective role unless all of the structures involved are mobilized. Each time the problem of family planning has been discussed on television (roundtables, documentaries, films), couples, feeling that they are practically expected to do so, have come to the Maternal and Infant Protection (PMI) centers the next day. But they have often found these center lacking in products or qualified personnel.

[Question] At the end of the proceedings, a plan of action was established. What are its main guidelines?

[Answer] I would like first of all to emphasize that the party officials, Messrs Messaadia and Ghazali, who head the Permanent Secretariat of the Central Committee and the Department of Social, Economic and Legal Affairs, respectively, stated the problem clearly. It was not a question of limiting ourselves to religious speculation or nostalgic references to the past. The problem of family planning already existed in the time of the Prophet. A number of verses bear witness to the fact that he urged the safeguarding of health and family planning. It was not a question for us, therefore, of establishing whether this is a sin or not—the problem was settled by the futwa itself—but of looking to the future and planning the

actions, which must be scrupulously followed up. The opening address by Mr Messaadia was, moreover, adopted by the participants at the session as a working document.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs is to improve religious training and increase vigilance, particularly where the Friday sermons are concerned. Certain imams sometimes preach quite the contrary of what the futwa has instructed, and are in fact hiding behind religion to promote backward ideas.

Subjects related to demography and family organization will be introduced in the social and religious education courses to develop the awareness of the children beginning on the basic school level.

The steps already taken in the realm of social protection will be strengthened in order to guarantee better consciousness raising and more control on the level of the social institutions through the social brigades.

The Ministry of Health has organized an important mechanism—1,900 health units specializing in family planning. Their resources for operation nonetheless remain inadequate (lack of or poor distribution of contraceptive products, lack of qualified personnel, etc.). In addition, the participants demanded widespread distribution (above all in the pharmacies) of the contraceptive products designed both for men and women, and even for minorities which are allowed to use only certain types.

"We are told that products are arriving in large lots. We would prefer that they arrived speedily, because we are getting them when they are already out of date," one participant said.

In a year, we will undertake an assessment of the planned actions. It serves no purpose to draft voluminous and detailed reports every 4 or 5 years. Only regular checking can be effective. It is necessary to establish the responsibilities of each individual clearly and to penalize those who have not done their work.

[Question] You participated in the organization of this conference and have crisscrossed the country discussing the subject of family planning before hundreds, indeed thousands, of persons. What have you learned, after these 2 days of work, that is new?

[Answer] Certain speeches gave me a better understanding of the breadth of the problems posed. I learned that in their Friday sermons, some imams are saying categorically: "Don't listen to them. It is forbidden to proceed in this way."

I have also learned that people sometimes travel hundreds of kilometers to reach a PMI center, only to find it unable to meet their needs. And that even in Algiers, the pill is not to be found in any pharmacy, and one must spend about 500 DA to obtain a proper intrauterine device.

The bodies responsible for consciousness raising and information cannot play a compelling role unless the resources needed can be found and made immediately available to all.

But the example of the industrialized countries, which have become nations of aging people, show us that in the realm of demographics, one must not go from one extreme to the other. What is needed instead is to achieve a situation of balance and mastery of the birth rate, which necessarily involves an "improvement in the social status of women." This remains at the heart of the concerns of the UNFA.

In addition, it is necessary to prevent the population issue, the number one problem in the country, indeed its only problem, from becoming a sort of scapegoat forced to shoulder the blame for everything.

[Question] What would you like to say in conclusion?

[Answer] I am amazed that the study of a problem of such importance to us, to our future, has had such limited repercussions in all of the media, although they were fully represented. The discussions were very important, and the participants, the speakers, were in many cases high-ranking political officials or eminent specialists.

If family planning is really a crucial problem for us, how can this disinterest be explained? And at a time when long columns in the periodicals and repeated broadcasts calmly go on at length about the state of mind or the concerns of athletes and trainers, both before and after their games!

5157

EGYPT

Commentary Calls for Governmental Legal Reform

45040083b Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
15 Mar 88 p 6

[Article by Mursi 'Atallah]

[Text] It is truly a difficult balancing act to live among a number of strange phenomena which neither reason nor logic can explain or justify, even though these phenomena have been the subject of broad questioning by the Egyptian public opinion for nearly 20 long years, and even though the phenomena leave the way open to whispers, winks, and insinuations concerning those who

benefit from these strange phenomena that continue to be present in the form of insurmountable problems from which the majority of the people suffer, day and night.

It is totally incomprehensible how the "free rein" policy can be permitted to continue in the housing sector, to the point whereby random housing has become a cancerous danger defacing Greater Cairo, while in the heart of Cairo there are houses without people and people without houses!

At a time when we suffer from a terrible food crisis, it is also incomprehensible how encroachment upon cultivable land is allowed to continue, to extend to the Nile River and reach the level whereby some ditches and canals are filled and surrounded by buildings, while we urge people to storm, reclaim, and cultivate the desert and to look for every drop of underground water, regardless of the cost, so that the new communities may be issued birth certificates that make up for the death certificates we have issued voluntarily for the dearest and best lands by allowing the topsoil of these lands to be scooped away for use in brick plants, or by allowing buildings to be constructed on them shamelessly.

What is more surprising than all this is that we have a stock of unsold local products, such as ready-made clothing and furniture, while the markets are inundated with similar imported products that drain hard currency resources which we most sorely need to supply the citizens' essential goods, such as oil, sugar, etc.

I do not wish to dwell on detailing numerous strange phenomena that concern the people and cause them to pose questions, because I don't have enough space here. Nor do I wish to ask whether the government, the people, or both are responsible. I only wish to note that resolving this different balancing act is neither difficult nor impossible. Instead, it is possible and easy to solve these problems if we successfully restructure the authority of the executive government agencies, if we apply the laws soundly and strictly to everybody, without exception, and if we end the policy of offhandedness and flattery which has reached the point of letting housing be built in the lap of the historical area of the pyramids. It is as if we do not want to be content with encroaching upon the present, but wish to obliterate the deep-rooted past, even if it is buried in the sands.

08494

Head of Coptic Church Discusses Recent Mubarak Visit, Social Trends
45040071a Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI
17 Feb 88 p 3

[Interview with Pope Shinudah by Salah al-Din Hafiz]
[Text] Conversation with His Holiness Pope Shinudah the Third is fraught with a particular importance. As well as being head of the Coptic church, he is a public man with his views, vision, and expertise in politics, society, the economy and morals, and he has a profound ability to converse about the inner nature of things.

Whenever I have gone to him I have found something new in him which he has stated, and his constant processes of following up on the events of the nation and developments of the world are unceasing. However, this time I found him split between joy and anxiety. He was joyous and optimistic about the results of President Mubarak's efforts to make peace rule in the region and the restoration of Egyptian-Arab relations to their state of integrity. At the same time, he was concerned about the manifestations of social and moral deviation which are appearing in Egyptian society. He was also concerned about the spread of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory.

The Uprising Is a Defense of Rights

[Question] The Palestinian uprising has managed to create a severe shock in the prevailing atmosphere, in the Palestinian and Israeli, Arab, and international frameworks. How do you view this uprising?

[Answer] While we are talking about the Palestinian uprising, we must take a number of things into consideration. The first is that every people in the world has the right to have a nation and the tragedy is that the Palestinian people are living without a nation. The second thing is that the Palestinians have the right to seek the restoration of their national rights, and they must defend themselves. The third thing is that when all peaceful international methods for regaining their rights failed, the Palestinians were compelled to resort to force and an uprising to demand their legitimate rights, so that their cause would not be forgotten and turned into mere history that has gone and ended.

We have observed that the Jews have paid no attention at all to any international resolution. All peaceful methods have failed. We have also noted that the increase in Jewish settlements in Palestine has begun to involve an extension of Jewish policy and destruction of all Palestinian rights and Arab rights in general. It was necessary that there be someone to stand against the policy of expansion, the spread of settlements, and the policy of indifference the Jews use in confronting any resolution of the United Nations or any international body or power.

Therefore the uprising occurred. It reached such the force that it has had an international echo; all the countries of the world have felt it, and they have felt the policy of inhumane repression with which Israel is confronting this uprising.

We have observed that the uprising has continued to be strong for a long period; it has not just been a day's demonstrations that come to an end. National feelings of a special kind and a feeling of their rights, and that they are living in an atmosphere dominated by violence and occupation has been implanted in the spirits of the children, who are the Palestinian people's roots of the

future. I personally feel that the Palestinian uprising must be met with strong Arab support and the Arab countries must support it so that it will reach its objective.

The uprising occurred with suitable timing, too, and it has been a successful attempt to bring the Arabs together. We have observed how many Arab countries have welcomed Egypt's return to them, and their return to Egypt. They have felt that the unity of the Arabs can have a great effect in numerous areas, with respect to the war between Iraq and Iran, the Palestinian uprising and the Arabs' position on the Jews, and the Arabs' reputation in the international context, because some countries feel that the Arabs cannot meet and have a unified decision and common strength, and this has had a bad effect on the future of the Arab countries in the East and West alike.

Egypt and the Arabs—The Return of Harmony

[Question] The Arab scene is now raging with events. What is your evaluation of the prevalent Arab condition?

[Answer] We have in fact lived through historic times which have provided us with a series of events. The first event was the restoration of diplomatic relations between many Arab countries and Egypt.

The second event was President Husni Mubarak's visit to the Gulf countries, Iraq, and Jordan. These were visits which have shown the spirit of brotherhood and love, and they have not just been official visits. Through them the Arabs' joy over their unity through the presence of the great brother, Egypt, in their midst has been apparent. The Arabs' hopes have started to revive once again and a climate of optimism has started to dominate the Arab environment, which has encouraged the other Arab countries whose relations with Egypt have not been restored to take steps to arrive at this result.

We have also been gladdened by the president's visit to Morocco and the very good reception with which he was greeted there.

Mubarak Speaks in the Name of the Arabs

We also believe that another important event was President Mubarak's initiative and his recent visit to Europe and America to present this initiative to the major countries and convince them of the importance of the international conference to support peace in the region, in order to solve the Palestinian problem, along with the importance of peace in the Gulf and Lebanon.

We have found that President Mubarak's visit bore another noble notion, since he traveled not just as a ruler but also as a benevolent intermediary defending others and presenting issues which concern the whole region.

He did this after he visited the Arab countries and consulted with them on what could be reviewed and agreed upon. Here, Egypt has taken on the form of Arab preeminence and leadership, or at least the form of the big brother defending his other brothers and his whole family. This is a point which gladdens us as Egyptians.

Here we come to another conclusion, which is the start of international action relative to these issues in combination, because the concern with the Middle East issue was that it would stagnate and lie dormant, or not receive the attention appropriate to it.

The issue of the Palestinian uprising, for example, has come to occupy an important share of the news of international newspapers, reflecting the attention of international public opinion. This without a doubt has its results. We demand that these steps have their practical results and that other steps follow them so that a comprehensive solution to these issues, which is the solution we all want, may be reached.

[Question] We have read that you sent a church delegation to the United States of America a short time before President Mubarak's arrival there. What specifically was this delegation's mission?

[Answer] I sent two bishops, His Excellency Bishop Bashawi and His Excellency Bishop Benjamin, to have the honor of receiving the president in Washington, and I had them bring a letter in my name to the Copts in America bearing a word of appreciation for President Mubarak and his efforts on behalf of peace, the importance of his trip, a prayer that he return happy with the success of his efforts, everyone's support for him and the Copts' solidarity with him in all his steps. The letter was published in brief in the newspaper WASHINGTON POST with a great welcome for the president.

The Egyptian church in Washington, along with other churches in many cities, made great efforts to welcome and support the president. At the same time, I spoke by telephone with their eminences the priests in America so that they would have the honor of receiving the president, and that happened.

The president received the two bishops in Washington. Attending the meeting were the Egyptian ambassador and the priest of the church there. Everyone felt that all Egyptians, Muslims, and Copts, were taking a position of affection and support for their president in Egypt and in the expatriate world.

We Will Not Enter Jerusalem Alone

[Question] We read an announcement in a paper about a company in America which is organizing tours for Egyptian Copts to visit Jerusalem. At the same time we know your firm position regarding the Copts' not visiting Jerusalem as long as it is under Israeli occupation. What is your opinion on that?

[Answer] In reality, I do not know anything about that company, though it appears evident that it has its commercial tourist goals, aside from the political aspects. However, our churches forbid visits to Jerusalem, not just for Copts in Egypt—rather, that extends to Copts who have emigrated, because the issue is one of a cause and a principle. I am constantly repeating the phrase which I often stated before, which is that we can enter Jerusalem only with the other Arabs and with our Muslim brothers in Egypt. We must all have a single position and opinion in this regard.

The Egyptian Church and the Southern Sudan

[Question] There is no doubt that you along with all Egyptians are following the development of conditions in the southern Sudan, where the struggle is assuming a political military form to which some people are trying to give a tinge of religious character. What is the role of the Egyptian Coptic Church, which has an African dimension, in this regard?

[Answer] We actually have two archbishops in the Sudan, one the archbishop of Khartoum, Uganda, and Kenya and the other the archbishop of 'Atbarah and Omdurman. However, our churches are in the northern Sudan—that is, we do not have churches in the south. We ought to have been concerned with our children in the southern Sudan. The Coptic church ordained a priest who was a southern Sudanese to serve the area, but he was killed years ago, and we need to have a role in the southern Sudan.

The relationship of the Coptic church in the north with the Sudanese society and government is a very good one, and I hope that we will be able to work in the southern Sudan. I promised this when I met recently with the vice chairman of the council of the Sudanese head of state.

[Question] Permit us to go back deep into Egyptian society. You must be observing the numerous social changes going on now, along with the acts of deviation and new crimes against Egyptian people that are accompanying them. How do you explain this in terms of social, economic, and religious factors?

[Answer] There is no doubt that we are living in a changing social atmosphere and it has its many causes, among them that the world today is existing in a commingled state, with all its continents, since there is no country that is in isolation from others. Therefore the changes that occur in the Western world have an effect in Egypt, for example. Western ideas and social patterns move from one country to another. The media have their impact.

We can say that the rural areas have lost their simple nature, now that radio, television and videos have entered them, which have caused the simplicity and innocence of the rural areas to be transformed. The migration of rural inhabitants to the city for many

reasons has caused the social composition to change greatly. In addition, the new ideas about freedom have embraced unsound notions, and when children grow up their concern now is to become free in their views and their conduct and to be freed from all authority, whether that is the authority of the father and the home, the school, or the chief at work. Indeed, sometimes they try to rid themselves of the authority of the law. Liberation from all authority is a deviant notion of freedom, because man lives free within the scope of examples, values, the law, public order, and social order, so that we grow without rising up against everything.

Let us not forget the economic changes either. We in Egypt sometimes live between a class which has become enriched to millionaire status and a poor class which cannot make ends meet, and the middle class almost does not exist. All this has its effect. The economic problem has its effect on society — psychological problems to attempt to get rid of poverty, for example, through crime. Indeed, I consider that the cause of many crimes and acts of moral deviation is either excessive wealth or excessive poverty. The former could lead to prosperity and the search for enjoyment, where morals become corrupted, and the second leads to crime through the desire to meet requirements in a deviant manner or through the revolution of the poor against the rich.

The problem of narcotics, for example, has many features, a deviant moral feature, a feature where it is viewed as a way to become rich and trade, then a foreign policy feature where peoples are corrupted through narcotics, temptation and the degradation of young people. We must find the starting point.

The Man of Religion and Resistance to Deviant Conduct

[Question] Doesn't the man of religion have a role in resisting this plague?

[Answer] The task of the man of religion is to guard against narcotics. After a man deviates on the road of addiction, he may perhaps need a doctor and a cure more than a man of religion, because sometimes narcotics are a flight from reality, so that the addict can live in an illusion. In summary, this subject needs profound study and firm resistance, because narcotics lead to other crimes, since some people steal in order to buy drugs, or kill, for example.

There also exists in the society a change in terms of a breakdown of values and also an intensification in the realization of values, that is, extremism and counter-extremism in social life. There are crimes which we must pause to contemplate, such as the crimes of murder among spouses, children and parents. Murder in the family environment is a strange new thing which did not previously happen in this form. Sometimes crimes occur because of nervous breakdowns or the defense of honor.

All this leads us to the point of religious upbringing. This consists not of information that is given to the individual but rather practices in which he is raised. Religion is life more than it is just information or thought. Religious life is not just one of man's aspects but comprehends all of man. It is not just the relationship with God in fasting and praying, but it is in the life of love, affection, peace and cooperation with all.

Therefore, our society needs religious training for the child so that he can grow up with it from the beginning of his life with fixed values through which he can live an excellent, integrated social life. Through such a religious education, we can build a sound society which will produce not repression but persuasion and education. God's counsel is not just orders, but lofty values in which man has conviction, in which he believes, and by which he lives. This is how the conditions of society improve. By the way, religious education is not only necessary for children; rather, it is desirable for families. For example, we do not have schools which raise adults on the notions of marriage, the formation of the family, the education of men in the psychology of women, and of the education of women in the psychology of men so that each of them will understand the way to a common life, the solution of problems, and the upbringing of children. Marriage is not the intermixing of men and women — rather, it is an integrated social responsibility.

The Decline of the Family and School

[Question] Don't you find that the role of the family and the school in the education of children has greatly declined in the light of these social changes?

[Answer] The duty of the father and mother in raising children is extremely important. The child begins as soft, malleable clay in the hands of the parents. Why should this clay slip from the parents' hands so that others can take it over? How has it been able to rebel against the leadership of the parents, with all the love, attention and exertion they have offered? Moreover, are the parents offering the proper model to the child, offering a life he can absorb and engage in, triumphing over the foreign influences of the society? For this reason it is necessary to view social life from numerous angles, not just the home but also the school, and the values, morals and forms of conduct through which it influences the student. We have started to hear about students who commit aggression against their teachers, and a time has come when teachers are afraid of their students and flatter them in order to gain their satisfaction and be spared their harm!

I also feel deep down that the media have a basic obligation in education. Sometimes there are movies which have a psychological and spiritual effect on people who see them or positions which they bring down on themselves or those who imitate them in life. Therefore it is necessary that the media offer spiritual guidance to the people fully to correct the errors of the society.

We need a kind of enlightenment and acculturation of people spiritually, intellectually, politically and in the home. We need an understanding of freedom and the way to use it. Freedom in its genuine sense is liberation of the inner man from his intrinsic mistakes. If freedom is given to a deviant person, he will abuse it and freedom in his hands will become a weapon against him and against the society. To that end, there have been laws and statutes. Their goal is not to limit the freedom of people; rather, they organize their freedom so that people will not commit aggression against the freedom of others. People are free in their conduct, so that they will not harm themselves or harm others, or conflict with the public order.

Freedom and the Education of Society

[Question] What then is your conception of freedom?

[Answer] Just as we say that every river has two banks, whose task is to keep the river's water from penetrating to the two sides, indeed to push the water in a proper direction, not to limit the freedom of the river.

Thus, it is possible to raise our young people and children in the means of using their freedom. The more their maturity increases, the more abundant the freedom they are given and there then is a sound course which creates a relationship between maturity and freedom.

The goal of this upbringing and enlightenment is the public interest, so that the people may understand their rights and obligations. Every right is matched by an obligation. Sound, stable people are ones who perform their obligations before they think about their rights. There is no doubt that everyone has obligations toward the family, the society, the nation and mankind in general. This is the basis of a sound society. Everyone has the right to have his resources grow so that he can lead a better life, but he has the obligation that these resources exist through sound means and also that they be used for his good, the good of the needy and the good of the society in which he lives. It is not permissible that he usurp the rights of others or the rights of the government, especially taxes; thus his will be clean money and he will use it properly. It is not possible that a person should reach this level unless he is brought up in a sound manner in the love of society and affection for others, and not seek just his happiness but the happiness of the society as a whole, so that people may emerge from attention to themselves alone to attention to everyone around them, and the old saying may be realized: A person who lives for himself alone has not lived.

11887

LEBANON

Waqf Minister Calls for Muslim-Christian Dialog
44040114b Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
12 Feb 88 p 3

[Text] His Eminence Minister of Waqfs, Islamic Affairs and Holy Places Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khayyat received

Jerusalem's Roman Catholic Patriarch Michel Sabah in his office yesterday morning.

During the meeting, Dr al-Khayyat surveyed the circumstances of the people in the occupied territories and their heroic stand against Israel's harsh measures.

The minister reviewed the steps which the ministry has taken, at King Husayn's direction, to allocate allowances for the families of martyrs of the uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and for students at Jordanian universities who, because of the heroic uprising, have been unable to receive financial assistance from their families.

His Eminence emphasized the importance of Muslim-Christian meetings held to back just Arab causes. Referring to what the ministry has done to support the perseverance of the West Bank people, he said that the ministry spends half its budget on waqf projects in the West Bank.

He also reviewed the ministry's achievements, particularly in the areas of training preachers and imams, preaching and guidance, and issuing laws to ensure that these activities carry on in the best possible manner in accordance with the principles of Islam.

Patriarch Sabah underlined the importance of the ongoing Muslim-Christian dialog aimed at achieving cooperation and joint coordination in the service of Arab causes, particularly the Palestinian cause.

The Patriarch praised King Husayn's efforts to unify the Arab ranks, unite their voice, and do everything in his power to direct world public opinion towards just Arab causes, particularly Palestine.

Acting Deputy Minister Shaykh Mashhur Hammud and Public Relations Director Nayif Abu Rajab were present at the meeting.

8559

Soil Conservation, Rural Development Planned for River Basin

44040114a Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
13 Feb 88 p 20

[Article by 'Abd-al-Majid Abu-Khalid]

[Text] During the seventies, the government concentrated its development efforts on irrigated farmlands, particularly in the lowlands. Now that its efforts to achieve integrated rural development in those areas have been successful, the government has turned its attention to developing rainfall-dependent agricultural areas in the kingdom's highlands.

The al-Zarqa' River basin development project is one of the projects which has been given priority, because it embodies the government's policy that developing agriculture is the first step towards rural development in the highlands. This project is listed in the current 1986-1990 five-year development plan, and the government has provided it with the necessary financing and all the requirements for successful completion.

The Agriculture Ministry conceived of the idea of the project some time ago, following the construction of the King Talal Dam from 1973 to 1978. The idea was reinforced when preliminary studies showed that sedimentation in the dam's lake was taking place at the rate of 1 million cubic meters a year. This prompted the Agriculture Ministry to draw up a soil conservation project for the lower al-Zarqa' River basin, the area most directly affecting the King Talal Dam.

Preparations for this project included an exploratory study, conducted in 1977 in cooperation with the German Development Agency, which classified soils and land use in the project area and investigated ways of developing them, as well as a study of the substructure of the region, conducted in 1981 in cooperation with the Arab Agricultural Development Organization.

In order to shed some more light on this important development project, the Jordanian News Agency met with several officials involved in this project and with some of the people who will benefit from it.

The Assistant Project Director

Agricultural Engineer Ahmad Sa'id 'Abbas, who is the assistant director of the al-Zarqa' River Basin Development Project of the Agriculture Ministry's Project Directorate, explained that the 3.157 million donum river basin can be divided into three subsidiary basins.

The upper basin, or the Wadi al-Dalil basin, covers 1.732 million donums, of which 1,476,100 donums are in Jordan and the rest in Syria. This region is a sparsely-populated, arid semi-desert which through the use of ground water could be developed as grazing lands and used for livestock.

The 'Amman-al-Zarqa' Basin covers 6 million donums and is a densely populated industrial area.

The lower basin, which is the project area, covers 825,000 donums. It is a relatively densely-populated agricultural area extending from Suwaylih and al-Jabi-hah in the south to Sakib, al-Dajniyah, and Qafqafa in the north, and from al-Sakhnah, Bal'ama and Rahab in the east to King Talal Dam, Sumiya and Umm al-'Amad in the west.

170,000 People

Engr 'Abbas added that the project area has a population of 170,000, 52.5 percent of which lives in three refugee camps and the rest in Jarash and 109 other villages and population centers. This includes 7,500 farm families, averaging 7.1 persons per family, which make up the project's target group.

The average agricultural landholding varies from 25 donums in the moister western region to 460 donums in the drier eastern area, with an average of 124 donums per family. The yearly family income has been estimated at 630 Jordanian dinars.

Engr 'Abbas pointed out that the project area's elevation varies between 250 and 900 meters above sea level, and can be divided into four agricultural and climatic areas. The first area has an average yearly rainfall of more than 450 millimeters, and makes up 11 percent of the total area of the project. The second area, which gets between 300 to 450 millimeters of rain each year, makes up 51 percent of the project area. The third area receives from 200 to 300 millimeters of rain each year, and makes up 30 percent of the project area. The fourth area gets less than 200 millimeters of rain per year, and makes up 8 percent of the project area.

The Project's Reasons and Goals

Engr 'Abbas said that the project area, like other high-land areas, suffers from a serious problem: accelerated soil erosion resulting from a disturbance in the environmental equilibrium due to long-term, ongoing human activity consisting of poor use of farm lands and over-exploitation of renewable natural resources such as water, soil, and vegetative cover.

He added that soil erosion leads to a gradual decline in the productivity of farm land, and thus to a drop in the farmers' incomes, which forces them to abandon agriculture and migrate to the city in search of better job opportunities.

The soil erosion problem does not stop here. The eroded matter is moved by flood waters and accumulates in reservoirs such as the King Talal Dam, thus gradually reducing the storage capacity of the dam and its usefulness as a significant source of irrigation water. Furthermore, soil erosion reduces the soil's ability to retain water and increases the surface flow and loss of rain water through floods and wadis. In addition, increased sedimentation in the al-Zarqa' River causes the banks to collapse and leads to the loss of a considerable area of fertile, irrigable farm land on both sides of the river.

The project's goals can be summarized as controlling accelerated soil erosion and maintaining the productivity of the agricultural lands, so as to ensure a long-term source of livelihood for the rural population and

increased farm income, in addition to reducing sedimentation in the King Talal Dam lake, maintaining its storage capacity, and extending its usefulness as an important source of irrigation water.

Components of the Project

Engr 'Abbas said that the al-Zarqa' River basin development project is primarily a soil conservation project, and then a first, basic step towards integrated agricultural development. Increasing agricultural productivity to the optimum is not something which can be achieved during the 8-year course of the project; rather, this goal must be achieved over the long run, by means of agricultural guidance during and after implementation of the project.

He pointed out that the project differs from other existing or earlier soil conservation projects in Jordan in that it deals with integral geographic units. It treats the water basins as development units regardless of the administrative boundaries of governorates and districts. It also deals with all types of land, regardless of the size of the landholding, the type of ownership, environmental and topographic conditions, or usage patterns. Furthermore, it deals with privately-owned and government lands alike.

Three Projects

Engr 'Abbas said that according to the economic feasibility study and the technical studies, the project has been divided up into three projects.

The first is Subsidiary Project No. 1, which provides for the development of about 700,000 donums of privately-owned farm land. Since the chief factor in accelerated soil erosion is human activity, the project feels that cooperation with the farmers, and the farmers' participation in development, are basic conditions for the project's success. In view of the fragmented agricultural landholdings, the vast differences in the physiographic conditions and productivity of the agricultural land, and the need to comply with Jordanian land ownership systems and traditions, the project has adopted the idea of development on the individual farm level as a means of achieving general agricultural development.

Since there are many interlocking reasons behind soil erosion, this project has been drawn up to include three integrated, inseparable activities to limit erosion and permanently protect the soil. The first is the application of proper land usage principles and the replacement of existing land use patterns with better methods by which the land will be used according to its productive capacity, i.e. in ways which will yield the greatest production with the least soil destruction. This aspect of the project is based on a detailed soil survey classifying the land according to productive capacity. This sound land use will be reinforced by two other activities: construction measures to protect the soil, such as building stone

contour walls and terraces and planting trees; and implementation of agricultural production methods which will protect the soil and increase production, such as the use of agricultural machinery suited to the nature and usage patterns of the highlands, the use of improved seeds, agricultural fertilizers, insecticides and plants, and the improvement of farm management.

Subsidiary Project No. 2 calls for developing 126,000 donums of government-owned forests and grazing land and privately-owned forests.

This project is restricted to government land and private forests, because such areas are subject to the woodlands and pasturelands law. In short, this project calls for protecting, renewing and improving 60,596 donums of existing forests and using them in the manner most likely to meet the anticipated goals. For example, forests might be set aside for recreation, soil conservation, wood and fuel production or reserve pasturelands, or they might be used for more than one purpose, which would necessitate drawing up forest management plans.

These activities also include planting windbreak trees or multi-purpose fodder plants on 47,654 donums of now bare government land.

Subsidiary Project No. 3 involves controlling erosion and protecting the banks of the al-Zarqa' River. This project is aimed at controlling soil erosion and reducing siltation in the riverbed itself, which will in turn reduce sedimentation in King Talal Dam Lake. Some 2,570 donums of fertile, irrigated farmland on both sides of the river will be protected from flooding by building 6 kilometers of retaining walls in areas along the river which are likely to collapse. Some 37.25 kilometers of windbreak trees and fruit trees will be planted in several lines along the banks of the river. In addition, there will be 5.9 kilometers of combined retaining walls and tree plantings along both banks of the river. The designs and bid documents for the construction work will be prepared by consultants.

The Construction Schedule for the Project

Actual construction work on 1,500 donums of the project began early last year, at a cost of 28,600 dinars. This month, the second bid package, which will cost 40,000 dinars, will be put up for bids. The consulting companies for Subsidiary Project No.3 which involves construction to protect the banks of the al-Zarqa' River from flooding, have been approved, and construction will begin this year. The Agriculture Ministry's Project Department and the Woodlands and Soil Protection Directorate have signed an agreement to carry out the project involving vegetation measures, implementation of which will also begin this year. A local committee has been formed to draw up forest management plans for

Subsidiary Project No. 2 (developing forests and grasslands), and this project will begin this year. A survey of woodlands and grazing lands was begun late last year and is still in progress.

The Costs of the Project

According to the economic feasibility study, the project to develop the al-Zarqa' River basin will cost a total of 23.2 million dinars. The state will contribute about 4.3 million dinars, the farmers will provide 7.94 million dinars, and the rest will be obtained through loans from Arab development funds and a 2.2 million dinar grant from the West German government as part of the technical assistance.

The al-'Aluk Unit

Agricultural Engineer Hasan al-Ladawi, supervisor of the al-'Aluk unit of the al-Zarqa' River basin development project, said that in order to facilitate the project to develop privately-owned farmland and improve its management, the lower basin of the al-Zarqa' River has been divided into six administrative units called waterfall management units. Each unit is an independent development unit, and carries out the farm development process on two important levels.

There is the planning and design activities level, which is being handled by consultants and the field guidance agency. In short, the technical agency of the consulting company charged with farm planning, in cooperation with the guidance agency working in the waterfall units, decides which work site has development priority. Furthermore, each unit's guidance agency contacts the farmers, informs them of the goals and benefits of the project, and urges them to include their land in the project. If a farmer wants to join the project, he must provide the guidance officer with the required information about the current status of his farm on a form prepared for this purpose. He must also submit a copy of his deed and an official plat of the land he wants included, and sign Farm Agreement No. 1 to show that he wants his land to be included in the project. The guidance agency will help audit the farm's current income, and the consultant will prepare one map classifying the land according to its productive capacity and another map showing the proposed soil conservation measures.

Engr al-Ladawi added that the guidance agency discusses with the farmers the farm plan, usage options, and the soil conservation measures connected with each option. Once both sides agree to the plan, the farmer signs Farm Agreement No. 2, which is legally binding on both sides. The farmer cannot pull out once he signs it.

Engr al-Ladawi said that the second level involves construction, and is carried out by the contractor according to the technical specifications outlined by the consultant. Once the consultants finish preparing farm plans for enough farms in each unit, according to the technical

specifications and work conditions stipulated by the consultants, the central Project Department, through the guidance committee of the Projects Directorate, puts the soil conservation construction work up for bidding.

He explained that the al-'Aluk unit covers 94,000 donums, of which 68,000 donums are privately owned and the rest are woodlands. There are 542 farms in the area, and each farm family owns an average of 126 donums. The guidance agency, working with the consulting agency, has drawn up agricultural plans for the land, and has also drawn up a farm development plan which increases the percentage of gardens from 20 percent to 40 percent and reduces the percentage of farm crops by 25 percent and grazing lands by 50 percent, according to the nature of the land.

He added that the agricultural advisors are providing the farmers with fruit tree seedlings at nominal prices from the Agriculture Ministry's nurseries, so that the farmers can plant them at the right time. The advisors are also holding group and individual meetings to explain the concept of the project to the farmers and to offer them guidance in the modern methods now followed to improve farm production and protect the soil. He pointed out that soil conservation is being implemented on about 16 farms in the area.

He explained that the guidance agency, in cooperation with the grazing lands and livestock advisor, makes field trips to the unit's villages to offer the farmers advice and guidance on developing and improving the grazing lands and their livestock. It provides forage plant seedlings for planting, and follows up and guides the farmers who have already implemented soil conservation measures on their farms.

Agricultural Guidance

Agricultural Engineer Na'mah 'Uwayyis, agricultural guidance officer for the al-'Aluk unit, explained that he encourages livestock farmers to plant high food value grazing plants such as qataf [a mountain shrub] and alfalfa, as well as to protect the soil with terraces and windbreak trees.

He added that the project has promised the farmers to prepare and classify the land and to pay all the costs of the soil conservation measures, such as stone walls, earthen embankments, grading, getting the stones out of the land allocated for field crops, building stone contour lines, providing guidance for the farmers, and conducting experiments on the farmer's land.

The project has promised to draw up a plan for managing and regulating privately-owned grazing lands, so that they can be planted with grazing shrubs. It helps the farmers obtain fruit trees and provides advice and guidance on the planting and care of orchards and on all the

other agricultural activities decided on by the farm plan. The guidance officer offers advice on the use of farm machinery and other modern technologies.

Likewise, the farmer must implement the farm plan by planting, at his own expense, the trees or crops stipulated in the plan, under the supervision of the project's guidance agency. In addition, he promises to maintain, at his own expense, the soil conservation measures constructed on his farm, and to follow farm production methods which will guarantee soil conservation and increased production.

Petra Meets the Farmers

The Jordanian News Agency met with several farmers in the al-'Aluk area whose farms have been included in the al-Zarqa' River basin development project. They said they were pleased at how successful their farms have become as a result of the development activities, and at how the project's al-'Aluk unit has improved their land.

The farmers affirmed that the activities aimed at protecting the soil from erosion are very important. They also said that it is important to follow the farm plans drawn up for their farms, which call for using modern machinery and equipment and planting crops suited to the nature of the soil. All of these measures have been very effective in improving and developing their land.

They said that the unit's guidance agency has vaccinated their livestock against such prevalent livestock diseases as Malta fever [brucellosis], and has provided fruit tree seedlings at nominal costs. They said that they can feel a big difference because of the improvement of their land and farms, as compared to how things were before the project was carried out on their land.

They pointed out that the project has paid the farm development costs, which far exceed their material and technical resources. The soil survey, the preparation of productive capacity maps, and all the requirements of the farm development plan were free of charge, as was the construction of the soil conservation measures.

8559

SUDAN

Development of Cotton Production, Marketing Problems Reviewed

45040076a Khartoum AL-ASHIQQA'
2 Feb 88 pp 20, 21

[Article by al-Amin Hammudah al-Basha]

[Text] Sudanese cotton is without a doubt the pillar of the Sudanese economy. As well as being the main source of livelihood of a large segment of the Sudanese people, it constitutes the main primary source of foreign exchange in the country. Its contribution to export

receipts for the fiscal year 1987-88 has been estimated at \$159 million, that is, the equivalent of 24 percent of total exports (the fiscal year begins in July and ends in June).

As to the value of the cotton exported in calendar year 1987, that came to \$175 million (the calendar year begins in January and ends in December). In spite of this great contribution, this important cash crop has witnessed severe fluctuation in sales for reasons related to production on the one hand and marketing on the other. In this article, we will try to ascertain these reasons by presenting the cotton situation during this decade.

Production and Its Problems

Cotton production witnessed a terrible decline in the past few years. While the cotton yield in 1983-84 came to 1,161,000 bales, it began a decline in 1984-85 (1,074,000 bales), at an annual rate of 7.9 percent, reaching its lowest level in the eighties in 1985-86 (875,000 bales, that is, a rate of 26.9 percent). Production increased somewhat in 1986-87, totalling 861,000 bales (an increase of 9.7 percent).

This decline in production basically can be attributed to the reduction in land planted with cotton during this period. The season of peak production, 1983-84, occurred in conjunction with the greatest area planted with cotton in the eighties (1,006,000 feddans). This area declined in 1984-85 to 871,000 feddans, then to 812,000 feddans in 1985-86, after which it increased slightly in 1986-87, totalling 824,000 feddans.

However, average per-feddan productivity also has had its effect on the decline of production. Average per-feddan productivity declined from 402 qantars in 1983-84 to 307 qantars in 1985-86, increasing to 4.5 [as published] in 1986-87.

This deterioration in overall production may be attributed to the deterioration in the production of all classes of cotton except for Shambat, production of which began in 1985-86 in al-Jazirah and the White Nile. Long-staple cotton production declined from 432,000 bales in 1983-84 to 331,000 bales in 1985-86, rising to 396,000 bales in 1986-87.

The cause of this deterioration was not the shortage of cultivated area — which increased from 422,000 feddans in 1983-84 to 433,000 feddans in 1985-86 — but rather the drop in average per-feddan productivity from 3.9 to 3.2 in the same period. Indeed, the production increase in 1986-87 occurred in conjunction with the decline in the area farmed from 433,000 feddans in 1985-86 to 383,000 feddans in 1986-87!

Medium-staple cotton is the strain which witnessed the greatest deterioration in production during this period (because of its being substituted by the Shambat strain in al-Jazirah and the White Nile), since its production declined from 716,000 bales to 368,000 bales, then

215,000 bales in the years 1984-85, 1985-86 and 1986-87, respectively. The most important reasons which prompted the substitution of medium-staple cotton with Shambat-B include the affliction of the former by boll worms and white flies and the drop of its prices internationally to a large extent.

The production of short-staple cotton deteriorated also, from 57,000 bales in 1981-82 to 19,000 bales in 1983-84, then 9,000 bales in 1984-85; production in the 1986-87 season came to just 5,300 bales. In spite of the extreme receptivity to it, it depends on natural factors (such as rains) which have an intense effect on its production.

Shambat-B production increased greatly, from 60,000 bales in 1985-86 to 245,000 bales in the 1986-87 season. Perhaps the most important reason for this increase was the increase in the area farmed, from 49,000 to 227,000 feddans.

In spite of the relative increase in the posted prices of cotton to farmers in the previous period, in execution of the advice of the Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to provide an incentive for production, the returns from land and water also increased tangibly; the returns from land and water in the al-Jazirah project increased from 38 pounds per feddan in 1983-84 to 50 pounds per feddan in 1984-85 (31.5 percent), reaching 65 pounds per feddan in 1985-86 (an increase of 30 percent). As for the other projects, the increase for these years was as follows: 48, 62 and 80 pounds per feddan respectively, an annual increase of 29 percent.

In spite of the repeated devaluations of the Sudanese pound, the most recent of which was that of 80 percent last October, the increase in posted prices to producers did not equal half this percentage.

The most important causes of the deterioration in cotton production included the following:

1. Mediocre preparation of the land and crop cultivation.
2. Protection against the spread of insects harmful to cotton was inadequate.
3. The poor drainage of water in the al-Jazirah project and the paucity of irrigation water in the other projects.

Marketing

The period of the eighties has witnessed extreme fluctuation in Sudanese cotton sales in terms of shipments and value of sales. Shipments rose greatly, from 475,000 bales in 1982 to 1,101,000 bales in 1983, declined greatly in 1984, when they came to 851,000 bales, and 570,000 bales in 1985, then rose in 1986 to 937,000 bales and in 1987 to 939,000 bales. The effect of this fluctuation in shipments on cash revenues from cotton was relatively slight. In spite of the great increase in shipments in 1983,

the value in Sudanese pounds increased from 120 million pounds in 1982 to 392 million pounds, indicating that a great drop in prices had occurred (we will address ourselves to that subsequently). That was followed by a decline to 346 million pounds in 1984 followed by a great drop in 1985, when cotton revenues came to just 236.8 million pounds. In 1987, in spite of the modest increase in shipments, the price increased from 366.7 million pounds in 1986 to 455 million pounds.

This fluctuation in sales was in turn reflected in cotton's contribution to the budget. In the period from 1981-82 to 1986-87, the ratio of cotton exports to total export revenues was as follows: 26.7, 33.2, 50.1, 49.3, 42.8 and 42.1 percent, respectively.

For reasons which will be mentioned, the cotton inventory accumulated among exporters, coming to about 1,174,000 bales at the end of 1985 as compared with 961,000 bales at the end of 1984. At the end of 1986, the total inventory among exporters came to 897,000 bales. Since 1984, Thailand has assumed the top position in the list of countries importing Sudanese cotton, since its imports of Sudanese cotton rose from 154,000 bales in 1984 to 367,000 bales in 1986, that is, the equivalent of 39 percent of total shipments. Before this period, China was the greatest importer of Sudanese cotton. It stopped importing Sudanese cotton in 1985 and not a single African country has imported Sudanese cotton since 1983.

As for local cotton consumption, that witnessed a great fluctuation in the period 1981-86. It dropped from 92,000 bales in 1981 to 41,000 bales in 1982, increasing to 86,000 bales in 1984 and 125,000 bales in 1985, then dropping again to 112,000 bales in 1986.

Sudanese cotton is marketed abroad through the Sudan Cotton Company, formerly the General Cotton Organization, which buys cotton from the projects at prices posted at the beginning of the season. Former marketing policy called for the posting of low fixed prices for the marketing season, which the buyer would be bound to, or increases in it with no decline, for transactions in keeping with the movement of the market.

The current policy is more flexible, since it is based on the sale of all cotton, including excellent long cotton, in open awards, in addition to prices determined on the basis of individual contracts and the conclusion of transactions where it is possible to pay part in cash and part in commodities or debt servicing.

This award policy has realized great success which has enabled the company to dispose of most of the cotton, approximately. The remaining quantities will be sold at the beginning of the new season.

Marketing Problems

It is possible to break the problems facing the marketing of Sudanese cotton down into domestic and foreign ones. One can also break the foreign problems down into two parts, problems related to supply and others to demand. Supply has witnessed an intense fluctuation which reached its extreme in the 1983-84 season, when China applied a system of incentives that raised its production from an average of 12 to 15 million bales to 27 million bales. In order for it to dispose of this massive surplus, it resorted to policies of flooding the markets by reducing prices (dumping), and some major exporting countries such as Pakistan cooperated. The United States, which is one of the biggest producing and exporting countries, replied to these forms of government intervention by declaring a policy of subsidizing cotton exporters, which led to a great increase in world cotton supply and a great reduction in world prices, coming to 36 cents per pound in August 1986.

The policy of self-sufficiency in India, China and the Soviet Union also led to the transformation of these three countries, which, in the past, were among the most important importing countries, into long and excellent cotton exporting countries. Indeed, India, since the 1986 season, has become able to supply the world market with an average of half a million bales a year. World demand has declined in the case of long excellent cottons in view of the tremendous technological development in the textile industry.

World attention to the quality and type of cotton has increased. The International Cotton Advisory Board conferences, the most recent of which was held in Belgium last October, witnessed lengthy discussions between consuming and producing countries on the importance of the quality of the cotton and its lack of blemishes and boll worms. Some spinners' federations have gone farther than that, requesting the removal of bad cotton from cotton markets, with such a plan to start first with the application of an international classification system reflecting the real value of cottons as an alternative to the current classification system, which gives value and weight to the appearance and cleanliness of cotton and its staple length, while other characteristics, such as the softness and firmness of the cottons, have come to occupy more importance.

Some of the domestic problems can be summarized:

1. Boll worm infestation is considered one of the most important problems facing Sudanese cotton in the world markets.
2. Electricity breakdowns, the mediocre nature of labor, the crises in migration from the field to the gins and the lack of spare parts and maintenance for the gins have affected the level of ginning and have led to the gins'

failure to card quantities of cotton. Bright stale cotton in the 1986-87 season came to 468,645 sacks. This in turn has a negative effect in two different areas:

A. The spinning characteristics of stale cottons deteriorate because of their exposure to dirt, rain and mixing and consequently their prices decline.

B. The company is unable to confront demand for a specific strain at a specific time in view of the incompleteness of information on it, either because the ginning has not been completed or has not been sent to Port Sudan, or because it has not been re-sorted. For example, the company was not able to respond to the improved demand for Alakala and Shambat-B strains for these reasons.

Steps toward solving domestic problems:

1. Control of the boll worms problem by relying on the testing of all cotton produced, in practice, in the agricultural research authority laboratory in Wad Madani. Last year, 1986-87, the company managed to test all the Shambat-B and Barakat strain cotton produced. These tests will not solve the problem of boll worms but they will help in the process of sorting and classifying cotton on the basis of the extent of their affliction with boll worms so that the bad cotton will be presented for sale in its current, announced condition in the awards.

2. The company helped to establish the Sudanese cotton council, an agency on which vast hopes are placed to perform the tasks of planning for cotton, coordinating all agencies working in this sector, and helping to solve the problems and obstacles obstructing the resurgence of cotton in terms of production, preparation, and marketing.

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TUNISIA

Bank Governor To Renew Loans From Financial Backers

45190034a Paris *JEUNE AFRIQUE ECONOMIE* in French Jan 88 p 25

[Article by Mehdi Khaled]

[Text] The Tunisian government plans to make good use of the store of confidence which has been available to it in international circles since 7 November. Central Bank Governor Ismail Khelil recently presented the financing program for 1988. Tunis will then seek to obtain the whole of it from its foreign partners.

Tunisia's financial needs, estimated at \$800 million, will be mainly covered by grants of credit and commercial loans. Relations with the commercial banks, dormant since the summer of 1986 when the first private loan was granted, will be reactivated. The commercial banks will

participate in the range of \$100 to \$150 million in the current program. Ismail Khelil is persuaded that the Tunisian requests will meet with a favorable reception, because, he says, the banks have confidence in the political stability of the country.

Tunisia, already the leading Arab-African beneficiary of World Bank aid in terms of loans per capita, will receive a substantial contribution from that institution. A credit sum of \$350 million will be released for the 1987-1988 budget year, and the overall involvement of the World Bank in the present 5-year plan (1987-1991) remains set at \$1.5 billion. In addition to a structural adjustment loan, this credit will be allocated for the construction of housing and the maintenance of the highway infrastructure.

Expanded IMF Agreement

The IMF, another lender, is negotiating an agreement to be signed soon for an expanded credit arrangement covering a 3-year period. It will have less limiting conditions than the preceding standby arrangement. While the final amount has not yet been established, Tunisia plans to use the credit lines made available to it to the maximum. Arab funds will also be utilized. Beyond the multilateral loans, the Arab funds will be asked to participate in the program of transfers to the private sector and in the financing of new projects. Almost 60 Saudi businessmen came to Tunis in December to study the investment possibilities in several sectors.

The governor of the Central Bank has also announced that Western partners will participate in financing the deficit in the balance of payments current accounts. For example, negotiations are under way with France concerning the 1988 financial protocol. According to the preliminary estimates, economic growth reached 5.5 percent in 1987, vastly exceeding expectations. In fact, Tunisia had an excellent farm season and the tourist season surpassed all records. The devaluation had positive effects. Exports increased 16 percent in real terms (8 percent anticipated), and transfers from workers abroad doubled. This made it possible to reduce the trade balance deficit and to reduce the balance of payments current accounts deficit to 300 million dinars (\$376.7 million).

But this performance cannot be repeated in 1988. In fact, a net reduction in growth (+2.5 percent) is expected, since the lack of rainfall has led to a downward revision in harvest expectations. The gross domestic product will nonetheless increase by 4 percent, consistent with the planned goal. The foreign debt, \$5 billion according to government sources, represented 58 percent of the gross domestic product. Ismail Khelil hopes to bring this rate down to 50 percent by 1991 and to stabilize the debt service at 27 percent. He also plans to modify the debt structure. Long-term debts, at concessionary rates, which represent 65 percent of the total currently, are to increase to 75 percent by the end of the 5-year period.

An optimist about the loan potential of his country, Ismail Khelil is nevertheless aware of the threats hovering over the Tunisian economy. Not only will Tunisia become a net importer of oil by 1991, which will mean an annual hemorrhage of \$400 million, but all of its exports will have to face harsh competition, as well.

5157

Tax System for 1988 Financial Law Explained

45190034b Tunis LE TEMPS in French 4 Feb 88 p 2

[Article by Tijani Harrar, reprinted from the JORT, No 91, 29-31 December 1987; "Goals of the Tax System"]

[Text] A. Tax Measures

First of all, the 1988 Finance Law specifies the nature of the tax advantages from which industrialists who export will benefit and provides for their extension to trade activities and to services rendered for export activities. It is explained that individual entities engaged in export will benefit from a tax abatement equal to 40 percent of the sum of net income obtained from export operations and subject to the CPE. This rate was formerly only 20 percent for individual entities involved in sectors other than industry.

For industrial activities for export involving individual entities, there will be an exemption from the CPE on income obtained from exports, with an abatement equal to 40 percent of the sum of the net income obtained from exports subject to the CPE. This abatement of 40 percent applies to all other trade and service activities.

Companies engaging exclusively in exports and governed by Law No 20 dated 9 May 1984 are exempt from the tax on income from stocks and shares and from the CPE. There is also an exemption from the CPE for foreign-exchange income obtained by individual entities as a result of occasional services rendered abroad. It is made clear that managerial staff members and foremen of foreign nationalities working in enterprises entirely devoted to exports will benefit from a system calling for a one-time tax contribution of 20 percent of the amount of their compensation.

B. Savings Invested

Secondly, the measures serving as incentives for investing savings provide for a 50 percent exemption, instead of 30 percent, on income subject to the CPE for investments made through the savings-account system and allocated for the development of projects, or made within the framework of the 1969 Investment Code. All income allocated to investment, including that described in the 2 August 1987 Investment Code, is therefore subject to a 50-percent exemption.

Investments made abroad will benefit from the tax abatements provided for in the regulations in effect on profits earned in Tunisia, for projects which are approved and which utilize Tunisian manpower or Tunisian raw materials and products. These advantages will be established by decree. All of the tax rates for income from stocks and shares, drawing fees and income from circulating assets have been unified in a single rate of 20 percent, with the establishment of a tax credit of 20 percent on account of the CPE owed by individual entities. Let us note that the solidarity tax owed by individual or legal entities on the income from stocks and shares and the income from credit, the amount of which is 50 percent of the tax on income, has been eliminated. Loans made by the banks, social security funds and insurance companies on the monetary market will be exempt from the TPS, according a measure designed to avoid any increase in the cost of credit.

C. Tourism in the Sahara

Thirdly, two important measures are designed to promote tourism in the Sahara. The first has to do with the income and profits of individual and legal entities which are reinvested in whole or in part in approved tourist projects to be carried out in the governorates of Gafsa, Tozeur, Kebili, Gabes, Medenine and Tataouine. These sums, where individual entities are concerned, are exempt from the CPE, and where legal entities are concerned, they are exempt from the tax on company profits. This measure is limited by the territorial aspect of the project. The law provides that automotive vehicles used to transport tourists with a capacity of nine persons, including the driver, are exempt from the road traffic tax, but remain subject to the single road-transport compensation tax, at the rate of 1,600 dinars per passenger seat per month. Finally, in addition to the above-mentioned 1988 finance law provisions, we have been informed by a reliable source, the tax on industrial profits will be reduced from 38 to 10 percent. However, this tax will be combined with the CPE.

With the liberalization of imports of raw materials and equipment goods, tariff protection will reach a rate of 25 percent by 1991. In the course of 1988, this rate will be reduced from 52 to 43 percent. In the month of July 1988, the famous Tax on Added Value (TVA) will be applied, replacing the taxes on production and consumption and the TPS. This means that the TVA will affect indirect taxation and registry and stamp fees, as well as the resources planned to combat tax evasion and fraud.

It applies to individual and legal entities, and is designed above all to simplify the tax system and to lighten the fiscal burden on taxpayers, replacing the scheduled taxes such as the license tax, the IBPNC, the IRVM I.T.S. and the general tax—the CPE. Originally there were four rates for this tax, established at 6 percent, 17 percent, 29 percent and 44 percent, representing the equivalent of the existing rates. The number has been reduced to three—6 percent for craft sectors, tourism, etc., and 17

percent and 29 percent for luxury products. This tax reform falls within the framework of the 1987-1991 Seventh Plan, and is intended to make it consistent with the plan for economic and social development. This reform providing for the establishment of a single tax and a tax on added value is being awaited with a certain interest.

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Abu Dhabi Fund Grants Agricultural Loan
45190033d Tunis LE TEMPS in French 8 Feb 88 p 2

[Text] The Abu Dhabi Fund has allocated a loan of 8 million dinars to Tunisia for the partial financing of a certain number of projects included within the integrated rural development program.

This loan has been granted under favorable conditions, and will be added to the other credit this fund has made available to Tunisia, which comes to a total of 88 million dinars.

5157

Irrigation System To Benefit Ksar Ghilene Oasis
45190033c Tunis LE TEMPS in French 10 Feb 88 p 2

[Text] The Ksar Ghilene oasis in the governorate of Kebili, in the Sahara, will be provided with a network of irrigation canals in 1988. The governor of the region made this announcement during a working visit he paid to this locality.

On this occasion, the governor learned of the concerns of the local people, about the maintenance of the road linking Ksar Ghilene to Douz, in particular, and the allocation of aid to a certain number of citizens for the repair of their homes.

The governor said that this locality is scheduled to see tangible progress in the realms of crop raising, livestock breeding and Saharan tourism, within the framework of the regional development program.

5157

Eight Integrated Farm Projects Planned in Kairouan
45190033b Tunis LE TEMPS in French 10 Feb 88 p 2

[Text] Eight integrated farm projects will be carried out this year within the framework of a supplementary irrigation program undertaken by the Kairouan Irrigated Land Development Office.

These projects are part of a complex of 60 integrated projects already approved. They will cost an estimated total of 15.49 million dinars, and financing will be provided by the state.

In addition, the technical files on 43 similar projects are currently being studied with a view to their implementation in the region.

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Unemployed Youths Seek Entrance to Libya To Find Work
45190033a Tunis LE TEMPS in French 10 Feb 88 p 2

[Article by S.B.M.: "Worker Emigration to Libya—A Mirage"]

[Text] A dense crowd of people has gathered in front of the administrative offices at the Libyan consulate on Mohamed V Avenue in Tunis. The majority are young people. Seemingly exhausted, they have been waiting since the early hours of the morning. Why are they there? Some are not even sure. But one thing is certain—they are all applying for permission to travel to Libya. This is a venture in hope of a better tomorrow, of work—and perhaps of fortune.

For others, the motive for the trip is uncertainty or a desire for adventure, but their reasoning is logical.

"There is nothing to lose. We will have everything to gain."

It must be said that the glimpse of hope developed following a happy event for our country—the normalization of relations between Tunisia and Libya. Since the reestablishment of relations between Tunis and Tripoli was announced, we have seen a veritable rush of young Tunisians to the departments of the Libyan consulate, in the obvious hope of getting to Libya as soon as possible in order to resume employment or find jobs.

This ambition was encouraged by the visit paid us by Colonel Qadhdhafi, which was accompanied by the elimination of the visa requirement, making free travel between the two countries possible for the peoples of Tunisia and Libya.

A Solution to Unemployment

The fact that visas will not be necessary after 15 February eliminates a major obstacle for the Tunisian citizen who wants to go to Libya, inasmuch as the Libyan consular services were very slow in issuing these documents.

Some of those waiting in front of the consulate on Mohamed V Avenue are unemployed young people, but there are also "veteran" emigrants who returned to this country following the Tunisian-Libyan crisis and are hoping to get to Libya to find work. For, according to them, a number of businesses in Libya closed down when the Tunisian workers went home. Today, perhaps, with

the normalization of relations between the two countries, commercial activity will resume and, these people say, this would be good for both the Libyans and the Tunisians.

It is the hope of one sad young man, exhausted by the waiting, that Libya can provide a solution to his jobless situation. "I never planned to emigrate, but I have not found work in my own country. The only alternative is to find work there." Another young man, who makes the trip to the city from the interior of the country daily, says the same thing. "I have a skill, and I hope that with my specialty, I can find work to support my family."

All of the young people here have an idee fixe—to travel as a tourist to Libya and to try their luck. But to do this they must cross the frontier. And that is not easy. The Libyan authorities require proof of substantial travel funds—\$500 (about 400 dinars)—at the frontier. This is obviously beyond the financial capacity of the majority of the Tunisian "tourists" wanting to go to Libya.

Tourist Travel

The traffic jam on Mohamed V Avenue is therefore the result of this great uncertainty—will the authorities at the Libyan frontier accept Tunisian tourists who have only a mere 200 dinars, which is the tourist allocation allowed each Tunisian citizen who wants to travel abroad? For the trip to Ben Guerdane (on the Tunisian frontier) is costly for young people without money, and whether or not to take the risk, only to be turned back at the frontier precisely because of this \$500 requirement, is a difficult question.

There were many who were awaiting clarification from the Libyan consul on this point yesterday. When our newspaper made inquiries, the Libyan consulate admitted that for the time being, it has no definitive information to give travelers leaving for Libya. We were told, however, that within the framework of the agreements

reached between Tunisia and Libya following the visit paid to Tunisia by Colonel Qadhafi, it was decided that the \$500 requirement for Tunisians traveling to Libya would be eliminated.

Forcing Destiny

The fact remains that applications still take several days.

Whatever the case, one can only wonder at the determination of these young people who want to force destiny, going to Libya to find jobs for themselves in order to regularize their situation subsequently. We had believed, however, that this practice was a thing of the past, since Tunisia, as a high-ranking official stated, will not lapse again into the errors of the past, but will take pains to control Tunisian emigration to Libya, so as to avoid these problems.

When asked about the steps taken by the Tunisian authorities to channel this emigration, in particular since the elimination of the Libyan entry visas, an official at the Office of Vocational Training and Tunisian Workers Abroad responded: "For the time being we have not received any suggestions from Libya. It is true that we are seeing a rush to that country, because the political situation is favorable, but these are individual undertakings about which, unfortunately, we can do nothing. It is usual for the Ministry of Social Affairs to organize foreign travel for Tunisians after one of our agents has visited Libya to resolve and settle all of the problems with the Immigration Department in Tripoli. Therefore individuals who travel to Libya on their own will have to do so on their own responsibility."

It is a fact that these young people are awaiting clarification which seems to be slow in coming. Faced with the problems of unemployment, they dream of finding a place in the sun. If dreaming is allowed, hope should be too.

INDIA

Indo-Soviet Protocol on Defense Aviation Signed

46001287 Madras *THE HINDU* in English
2 Feb 88 p 9

[Text] India and the Soviet Union today signed a protocol for diversifying collaboration in the field of Defence aviation. It was signed by the Soviet foreign Minister for Aviation Industry, Mr. A.S. Systov and the Minister of State for Defence Production, Mr. Shivraj Patil.

The protocol, incorporating mutually agreed decisions for cooperation in this regard, was signed after wide-ranging discussions between Mr. Systov and the Defence Minister, Mr. K. C. Pant.

The two countries have established a joint Indo-Soviet group on aviation industry.

According to sources, during discussions, the two sides had touched on the interim manufacture of the latest MIG-29 in India, till the country's own Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) joined service with the Indian Air Force.

Two squadrons of the MIG-29 have just been inducted into the IAF making India the only country outside the Soviet Union to fly all the MIG variants. The MIG-29 is the front ranking interceptor of the Soviet Air Force.

All the three airlines—Air India, Indian Airlines and the Vayudoot—are evaluating Soviet aircraft for their fleets. Air India has already got IL-82 aircraft on lease from the Soviet Union.

Mr. Systov, who came here on January 25 as the head of a high-level six-member Soviet delegation, visited the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited units at Nasik, Koraput and Hyderabad and reviewed the progress of the licenced production of different series of MIG fighter aircraft, including the MIG-27s.

It was decided that the next meeting of the joint Indo-Soviet group will be held in Moscow later this year.

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Indo-Soviet Joint Venture in Construction Discussed

46001298 Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
9 Feb 88 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Feb 8—In a joint venture in building construction just launched between India and the Soviet Union, India is going to build as many as 30 hotels in the Soviet Union, each with a capacity of 600 beds at a cost of approximately 12 million roubles each, Mr Evgeni Rozanov, Soviet Minister for Construction, said at a press conference today.

Earlier, at a meeting which Mr Rozanov had held with Mrs Mohsina Kidwani, Union Minister for Urban Development, they discussed Indo-Soviet cooperation in city planning, housing, civil construction and architecture.

At this meeting, the Soviet Minister expressed his appreciation for the work initiated by the Indian companies in setting up hotels in Central Asia. He hoped it would be extended to other areas in the Soviet Union.

Mrs. Kidwani favored collaboration in low-cost housing technologies, use of industrial waste and fly ash, and architecture and sewage disposal systems. It was decided at the ministerial-level meeting that the two sides would exchange information on industrial and other new townships, with special care for the environment. Mr Rozanov invited Indian experts to visit his country to identify further areas of cooperation.

He said at the Press conference that the first three hotels would be located at Tashkent Bokhara and Samarkand where India would utilize its experience in monolith construction. India would provide the construction plants, construction materials and labor and the Soviet Union would provide sand and stones. Indian parties would be given the charge of constructing the hotels, for which tenders have been called. From the Russian side, the Intourist and the State Committee for Foreign Tourists will collaborate.

Mr Rozanov said no decision have yet been made on housing construction in the Soviet Union in the same way as the hotels were going to be built, "but this may come through after we see how our experience in the building of hotels come through".

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Italian Firm Offers Help in Light Helicopter Project

46001299 Madras *THE HINDU* in English
12 Feb 88 p 9

[Text] Over the past five years, Italian presence has been growing in strength in Indian industry, particularly in oil, fertilizer, machine tools, printing machine, typewriter, chemicals, food processing equipment, consumer durables and other sectors. For the first time, an Italian aerospace company has obtained a foothold in aircraft development programmes.

The Nardi group, a \$50 millions per year private Italian enterprise specialising in aviation hydraulics and avionics, has signed a contract with HAL for the design, development and production of the main and tail rotor actuators of the advanced light helicopter.

According to Dr. Emanuele Nardi, Managing Director, the contract was signed in July last year and is valid till October 1988. By then, seven prototype units of the

actuators would have to be delivered to HAL. The contract is worth \$2.5 millions. Engineers from HAL are associated with the project and the question of taking up series manufacture at HAL or in Italy will be decided later.

A ten-member contingent from Nardi, headed by Dr. Nardi, is here to apprise aerospace experts about the company's R&D and production programmes. The company, founded in 1933 as an airplane manufacturer, came out with FN-305, the first aircraft in the world with retractable landing gear. This low-wing monoplane was quite popular as a trainer.

After the war Nardi switched over to making aircraft sub-systems like landing gears, wheels and brakes, servo-controls and other hydraulic equipment, fuel system components, passive countermeasure systems, integrated flight control systems, and hydropneumatic suspensions. It was also engaged in making vehicle navigation aids for armored vehicles, gimbal and torquer assemblies for missiles, remotely piloted vehicles and their sensors, rotor brakes and rotor blade dampers for helicopters etc.

Heavy investment in R&D: The company has invested heavily in R&D in futuristic programmes like ballistic controls, electro-optics, composite materials and light flight control systems. At present it supplies sub-systems for aircraft such as the tornado, AMX, ATR-42, C-130, Westland etc. It will be supplying parts to the European Fighter Aircraft (EFA) and the ATR-12.

The present visit of Nardi executives is to brief the LCA (light combat aircraft) programme authorities about sub-systems that could be developed for the aircraft. The company is keen to offer its on-board crash/maintenance recording system which could not only fulfill the requirements for crash data recording but also serve many other applications for integrated logistic support, flight debriefing and pilot training.

Another item being offered is the mission data transfer system which is a portable device for rapid loading and retrieval of digital data. They simplify pre-flight operations by instant initialisation of on-board computers with specific tactical mission information and provide quick retrieval of mission and/or maintenance data for post-flight analysis.

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Gandhi Asserts No Compromise on Border With Pakistan

Talks With Army Commanders

46001303 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
10 Feb 88 p 1

[Article by Yusuf Jameel]

[Text] Udhampur, Feb 9—Troops in the Siachen glacier have been alerted against a possible major offensive by Pakistan to gain control of the strategic area in the

Karakoram range, north of Kashmir. The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, today held detailed discussions with Army commanders in this garrison town on the situation prevailing in the area.

Mr Gandhi warned Pakistan against attempts to gain control of the siachen glacier, scene of active hostilities between the two nation's forces since 1984 when New Delhi sent its troops to guard the undemarcated area.

Speaking to newsmen at the end of his daylong visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the Prime Minister said there would be no compromise on the Siachen glacier because the area was part of India and there was no question of a settlement with Islamabad on the issue.

Though Mr Gandhi's visit to the state was in connection with the formal inauguration of the Rs 585-crore prestigious Salal hydroelectric power project near here, it attained significance in the wake of reports suggesting Pakistan had raised an Army division trained in Arctic warfare with sophisticated arms for gaining control of the Siachen glacier. The Indian troops in the area were alerted on Saturday against the possible major offensive.

At his meeting with Army commanders at the Northern Command headquarters here, the Prime Minister suggested that the Army take effective steps to foil any attempt by Pakistan to annex the siachen glacier and strengthen security along the state's border with Pakistan. The talks dealt in detail with the border situation with reference to Islamabad's reported military buildup.

Senior Army commanders explained to the Prime Minister the steps taken by the Indian defence forces to prevent any Pakistani intrusion in Jammu and Kashmir. Mr Gandhi praised the role of the defence forces in "frustrating" attempts to keep the border problem alive, despite New Delhi's willingness to live in peace with its neighbours. "India has no territorial designs or desire to annex any other nation's territory but if war is thrust on us our forces are fully prepared to meet the challenge," he said.

Tripura

On the elections in Tripura the Prime Minister described as baseless the Opposition charge of rigging. He told newsmen that the polls were "free and fair" and wherever the Opposition lost it usually raked up the issue of rigging to cover-up for its defeat.

Asked whether the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the congress would be reorganised as demanded by many party men, Mr Gandhi said the reconstitution would take place soon.

No Cabinet Expansion

The chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, who was present at the press conference took state Congress leaders by surprise when he said there would be no Cabinet expansion. The present team of ministers was "competent" enough to carry on development works in the state, he said.

Earlier, the Prime Minister dedicated the 345-MW Salal hydroelectric project to the nation.

Talk to Consultative Committee

46001303 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
12 Feb 88 p 1

[Text] The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has spoken of a 'befitting reply' to Pakistan if the latter made a fresh attack in Siachin Glacier.

Addressing a meeting of the consultative committee attached to his ministry, Mr Gandhi said, "There is absolutely no question of our surrendering any ground in the area".

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr K. Natwar Singh, said there was no question of any dispute in Siachin. "The territory is ours" he added.

Members of the parliament from different parties had expressed concern over Pakistan's attitude on the issue.

It was second time in less than 24 hours that the Prime Minister had spoken on the issue. Yesterday a Jammu, he had ruled out any compromise on Siachin and said the country was strong enough to meet the mounting pressure on the northern border.

The whole gamut of international issues, including the six-nation summit, INF agreement, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, were discussed at the meeting.

Mr C.P. Thakur (Cong.) wanted to know whether the United States policy towards Pakistan would undergo any change after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Mr Natwar Singh drew the member's attention to the recent statement of the U.S. administration in which it had made it clear that American arms would continue to pour into Islamabad even after the Soviet pull-out.

"We have to keep a very close watch on the situation" he added.

Mr Gorbachev's announcement about withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was described by the members as an important development and clearly indicated that Moscow was sincere and keen on finding a political solution to the problem.

Earlier, the members were briefed on the Prime Minister's visit to Stockholm to participate in the six-nation, five-continent initiative on nuclear disarmament.

The members welcomed the initiative, and they were informed that India would take active part in the special United Nations session on disarmament beginning on 31 May.

On Sri Lanka, India stuck to its tough posture towards the LTTE ruling out a dialogue with it unless agreed to surrender arms as envisaged in the peace accord.

Mr Gandhi said there was no question of any softening of action by the Indian peace keeping force in disarming the LTTE.

The members who spoke included three former ministers for external affairs—Mr A.B. Vajpayee (BJP), Mr Dinesh Singh and Mr B.R. Bhagat (both Congress, Mr M.S. Gurupadaswamy (Janata), and Mr P. Upendra (TDP).

Jammu (UNI): Pakistani troops opened fire on two forward Indian pickets on Tuesday in Poonch. Two civilians, including a girl, were injured.

According to official reports, Indian security forces returned fire and the exchange continued for over six hours.

Pickets on which the firing took place have been identified as Bagial Dara and Sokar, according to official reports.

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India Reiterates Stand on McMahon Line

46001300 Madras THE HINDU in English
12 Feb 88 p 9

[Text] India today reiterated its position on the McMahon Line saying that it represented the 'customary, traditional boundary between India and China on the eastern sector'.

Asked for comment on the statement made by Chinese Foreign Office spokeswoman yesterday, the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said: "The customary, traditional, boundary between India and China on the Eastern sector has been further formalised by the McMahon Line. It is our policy to maintain peace and tranquillity all along the border and to settle all issues through peaceful negotiations".

The Chinese spokeswoman had said at a regular press briefing on Wednesday that China would never recognise either the McMahon Line or Arunachal Pradesh. She was reportedly reacting to a recent remark by the Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) that China constituted a major threat to India.

On January 31, the Chinese Ambassador, Mr. Tu Guo-wei in an address to the Krishna Menon Society here had said that 'the border situation today is not so stable, and is even marked with certain hidden danger'.

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Paper Interviews Head of Bharatiya Janata

46001288 New Delhi PATRIOT in English 3 Feb 88 p 4

[Text] "The health of democracy under the Rajiv dispensation does cause anxiety".

The pronouncement came from Bharatiya Janata Party president L.K. Advani during an interview to Patriot.

Stating that the health of a democracy had to be judged "by the attitude of the rulers toward the people" and the state of its institutions, Mr Advani said that the rulers' attitude to the ruled was "one of contempt".

Dealing with the health of institutions, he said: "Even during the emergency, Parliament's powers theoretically remained undiminished. It is only under this Government that the Commissions of Enquiry Act was amended, empowering the executive to deny even to Parliament the report of an inquiry commission".

Following is the text of the interview.

Then for many politicians, secularism is only a euphemism for minority appeasement, a device to garner minority bloc votes. The Congress has been the worst culprit on this count. The Rajiv Government's surrender to the communalist campaign against the Supreme Court, because of its Shah Bano verdict, has greatly encouraged communal militancy. It is this surrender which emboldened the leaders of the anti-Supreme Court campaign to give a call last year for boycott of Republic Day celebrations. These developments have had a reaction in the Hindus, a section among whom, has been arguing that minorities in India should be treated exactly as minorities are treated in Pakistan or in the Gulf countries, as second class citizens.

My party rejects this approach because it is contrary to our tradition and political values. But there is need also to reject the cult of minorityism which the pseudo-secularists in the country are consciously promoting. Let us all remember Sardar Patel's concluding words in the Constituent Assembly when the question of minorities was being discussed. He said: "In the long run, it would be in the interests of all to forget that there is any thing like a majority or a minority in this country, and that in India there is only one community".

As it is, those influenced by the Marxist ideology tend to equate the secular state with an irreligious state, and thus question the legitimacy of even Ramayana being telecast by the official medium, while those who subordinate all these questions to considerations of electoral gains or

losses are blind to the damage they do to secularism when they compromise on issues like Shah Bano or advocate proportional representation for minorities in the police. Both these approaches have weakened secularism, and have contributed to accentuating communal tensions. Last year has seen very ugly riots in Meerut and parts of Gujarat.

How do you perceive the state of democracy, specially in regard to: (a) The people's rights, (b) Centre-State relations, (c) Government-Opposition relations?

The health of democracy has to be judged first by the attitude of the rulers towards the people and secondly by the health of the institutions that sustain democracy.

So far as attitude of rulers to the people is concerned, it is not just of indifference, unconcern or neglect; it is one of contempt. Nothing illustrates this more than Rajiv Gandhi's personal life-style. Last year has been the year of the century's worst drought. The economy is in a very bad shape. When news appeared that despite this a Cabinet meeting was proposed to be held in a wild life sanctuary, and that shortly after, the Prime Minister would be going on an eight-day holiday to an uninhabited island in Lakshadweep, there was universal criticism of the proposals. The critics recalled the PM's trip to Andamans last year, along with family, in-laws and friends and felt it was a wrong thing to do. But all this had no effect on the PM. Twittering his thumb at public opinion as it were, he had his Cabinet meeting at Sariska and went to Bangaram, 500 kms off Cochin with his kinsmen and friends.

The principal institutions that sustain democracy are: a free press, a virile and vigorous Opposition, an assertive Parliament and an independent judiciary. The Government, under Rajiv Gandhi, has been systematically trying to weaken, if not totally subvert, these institutions. In the matter of press freedom, l'affaire Indian Express will remain an ineffacable stigma on the Rajiv Government. The Express has been campaigning relentlessly against corruption in high places. The raids on their Delhi establishments have been intended, on the one hand, to chastise the Express itself, and on the other, to caution the press in general to 'behave'. There have been more formal meetings between Government and Opposition during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure than ever before but in terms of output, these meetings have generally been barren. In fact, the Opposition has a feeling that these meetings are primarily a PR gimmick.

Even during the Emergency, Parliament's powers theoretically remained undiminished. It is only under this Government that the Commissions of Inquiry Act was amended empowering the Executive to deny even to Parliament the report of an inquiry commission. This of course was a legal curtailment of its powers, Parliament is being subjected, besides to a continuous erosion of authority because of the Executive's attitude to it. For the first time in Indian Parliamentary history even the

Finance Act has been amended by Ordinance. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has gone abroad even while parliament has been in session—a breach of convention—more times than perhaps all the former Prime Ministers.

Way back in 1974, Mr Kumaramangalam had propounded his thesis of a committed judiciary. The commitment was supposed to be not to the Constitution, but to the political philosophy of the ruling party. During the last three years a systematic effort has been going on to have the judiciary committed not to any philosophy but to the person of the Prime Minister. How else can one explain two eminent judges of the Supreme Court holding that destabilization of the Prime Minister meant destabilization of the country? The Thakkar-Natarajan Report has, indeed, severely impaired public confidence in the uprightness of the judiciary.

Strains between the Centre and States do not stem from any inherent shortcomings in the Constitutional arrangement as much as they come from the over-bearing and condescending attitude New Delhi has been adopting towards the State Governments. In case of non-Congress State Governments, the Centre becomes blatantly partisan. This has been witnessed for quite some time. But the Prime Minister threatening to dismiss a State Government if the Home Ministry certifies it to be “anti-national” should mark an abysmally low point in Centre-State relations. The health of democracy under the Rajiv dispensation does cause anxiety.

What in your opinion is the state of the nation's unity?

Never before since independence has the nation's unity and integrity been as gravely imperiled as it is today.

Punjab is all aflame. “Ten persons killed in Punjab today”, is no news; “No killings in Punjab today” earns a two-column headline!

The masses are still opposed to Khalistan. But Khalistan can no longer be dismissed as an empty slogan, mouthed by a lunatic fringe. Khalistanis have again seized control of the Golden Temple. A large-sized map of Khalistan has been put up there. Some weeks back a congregation convened by the UAD formally adopted a resolution demanding Khalistan.

In the Kashmir Valley communal fanatics and pro-Pakistanis are having a field day. Against the background of Pakistan's aggressive designs against India, the large-scale smuggling of arms that goes on at the border, all this adds up to a really perilous situation.

The situation in the northeast is no less alarming. Darjeeling district of West Bengal has been in a state of near anarchy for over two years. It is Subhas Ghising and his Gorkhaland activists who rule the roost in this region;

neither Rajiv's nor Basu's writ runs here. Illegal immigration from Bangladesh into Assam, West Bengal, Tripura, Bihar and other eastern States continues unabated. All these are threats to India's integrity. When one adds to them the serious social, communal, caste and linguistic conflicts that have been generated in the last three years one can easily see how grave is the danger to national unity.

Let it be remembered that in the 1984 Lok Sabha polls, two principal ingredients of Rajiv Gandhi's mandate were (a) Protection of National Unity and (b) clean Government. This Government has failed on both counts. Democratic accountability warrants that it should seek a fresh mandate.

What do you think of Rajiv Gandhi's “accord politics”?

Rajiv's accords, by and large, have resulted in increased discord.

The Punjab accord is dead, the Assam accord has failed to take off and the Sri Lanka accord has landed the country in an unenviable mess. The Mizo accord has brought seeming respite to Mizoram, but it has directly contributed to the deterioration of the situation in Punjab and Darjeeling where the militants feel convinced that the Rajiv Government understands the language of violence.

What, in your view, is the state of secularism in the country?

Theocracy is alien to Indian history. So, even though in 1947, India was partitioned on the basis of religion, and even though Pakistan declared itself an Islamic state, our Constituent Assembly gave to the people a secular Constitution. Under this Constitution all citizens are equal, irrespective of creed. There are no Class One citizens and Class Two citizens. There is no state religion.

However, if one goes through the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, one would easily see that our Constitution makers never intended a secular state to mean either an irreligious state, or a state that would disown the nation's ancient cultural heritage only because it was Hindu.

The culture of any ancient country is bound to be composite. But in our country, emphasis on the composite character of Indian culture is generally an attempt to disown its essentially Hindu content. Donald Eugene Smith has done one of the most comprehensive studies of Indian secularism in his book “India as a Secular State”. In this, he observes perceptively: “...despite the composite nature of Indian culture Hinduism remains by far the most powerful and pervasive element in that culture. Those who lay great stress on the composite nature of Indian culture frequently minimise this basic fact. Hinduism has indeed provided the essential genius of Indian culture”.

Policy Paper Tells Troubles in Electronics Industry

46001301 Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
12 Feb 88 p 6

[Text] A recent policy paper prepared by the Department of Electronics (DOE) tactily admits that all has not been well with the recent growth pattern of the Indian electronics industry.

Entitled "Strategic initiatives in electronics", the paper is scheduled to be discussed at a full meeting of the electronics commission, to be held on February 16.

With reference to the recent growth of the electronics industry, the paper argues that a change in the strategies may be necessary, since unhealthy growth will have to be pruned to allow slower, but more sound progress.

The DOE has stressed the necessity for "balancing foreign exchange requirements in electronics with increased exports", and hinted at a review of foreign collaboration agreements in the industry, with a view to penalising the organisations, which have "failed to truly indigenise, upgrade and innovate based on indigenous R&D".

The position paper also emphasises the necessity for enforcing the policy of phased indigenisation. It has observed that "phases of indigenisation have not been completed in many cases", as per the stipulated schedules.

One way that the DOE moots for ensuring that units adhere to their Phased Manufacturing Programmes (PMPs) is to take a bank guarantee from them to the extent of the duty concession enjoyed on the import of kits.

The DOE's insistence on the PMP is in marked contrast with the views of the study group on electronic components for the seventh five year plan. In its report submitted in 1984, the study group had argued that the "excessive stress" on indigenisation had led to "uneconomic vertical integration and in many cases, inferior quality".

Further, the study group had suggested that "the phased manufacturing programme need not be separately examined. This can be coupled with the raw material licence and should be controlled by the import policy existing at that time."

The DOE has also proposed the delicensing of production, in areas where indigenous know-how exists, and the rationalisation of the industrial approvals procedure.

Commenting on the current policy of permitting import duty concessions for units undertaking an export obligation, the DOE has observed that strict enforcement of these obligations could in some cases result in the closure of the concerned units.

The position paper, therefore, states that only units with a "credible export performance" be granted import duty concessions.

The DOE identifies the import duties on raw materials as one of the reasons for the high cost of Indian electronic components. However, since the landed costs of these raw materials are still well below their domestic costs of production, the DOE concedes that there may not be much scope for reducing duties.

As an alternative, the position paper suggests that electronic components manufacturers be given a concessional finance facility for fixed as well as working capital.

To establish an industry that would be able to compete with units in the developed countries, some of which have the advantage of completely written down capital, the DOE suggests that certain units be given "an outright grant" to establish a capital base.

The proposal for a soft loan facility to be administered by the DOE has once before been vetoed by the finance ministry.

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Violence Hallmark of Tripura Post-Election Scene

Government 'Embarrassed'

46001306 Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
12 Feb 88 p 9

[Article by Shikha Bose]

[Text] Agartala, February 11—Within hours of the newly-elected Congress-Tripura Upajati Juba Samity (TUJS) coalition government assuming office on the night of February 5, the tribal national volunteer (TNV) force struck once again at Bodormukam in the north district killing five non-tribals.

More killings followed, giving an indication of the kind of volatile and violent politics in the Tripura post-election scenario.

In the one month run-up to the elections around 105 persons lost their lives in attacks by the TNV. The state was declared a disturbed area on January 29, and the army was called in to restore peace and help reduce panic. At present around 28,000 security personnel, including almost five full battalions of the army, are deployed in Tripura.

The congress is committed to the position that the TNV has to be smashed completely—a policy the Prime Minister declared for his party on January 29 when he visited Tripura. The fall-out of this announcement was that 59 persons died in TNV attacks in two days.

The new chief minister's task is likely to prove difficult. Dealing with the TNV will mean the continued presence of the army. The state government will have to allow the army to conduct house-to-house searches for TNV insurgents in the compact tribal areas.

Before the army could take up positions, TNV leaders, including Mr Bijoy Hrangkhal, had slipped across the border to safety. In allowing the army to conduct combining operations in tribal areas, the government will have to face hostile tribals. For the army to function effectively against the TNV, it will have to go to each house to identify the new comer from the permanent resident, which will cause problems as the army is not known to act with sensitivity.

This will place the TUJS in an awkward situation. The TUJS had welcomed the declaration of the state as a disturbed area as it would have been embarrassing to protest against the operation. Already state and central intelligence agencies suspect that the TUJS has close links with the TNV.

The TUJS position is difficult as it has set its heart on controlling the autonomous district council to which elections were held two years ago, where the TUJS got only four seats as against CPM's 16. To have remained outside the government would have suited the TUJS very well. That would have allowed it to disclaim responsibility among tribals for acts of commission or omission by the Congress.

The assessment here is that the Congress will have to indulge in some manoeuvring to advance the date for elections to the ADC. The Congress could squeeze the council for funds and stall the implementation of its recommendations. This would compel the CPM to ask for fresh elections before the expiry of the term of the council. The TUJS-Congress alliance can then hold out the promise to secure for the tribals the rewards they desire.

The performance of the TUJS in the recent elections has not been spectacular. Out of the 14 reserved seats it won seven; the rest went to the CPM. The TUJS president, Mr Budha Dev Barma, had said that his party would win at least 10 seats. Eleven people had died at Gabardih in the Golaghati constituency two days before the elections.

The bodies were being cremated even as people went to cast their votes at the polling station located 100 meters away from the cremation ground. This is indicative of the formidable strength of the opposition that the TUJS will have to overcome if it wants to gain control of the ADC.

In Tripura, tribal links are politically important. One of the aspirants for chief ministership, the erstwhile Maharani of Tripura, Bibhu Kumari Debi, described herself as having tribal links and said that the CPM opposition to her was the basis of these links. She attended a conference of tribals at Taidu some three years ago. Among the other participants was Mr Hrangkhal. There the call had been given for ousting the government of "refugee Bengalis", that is, the Left Front government.

The Congress has accused the CPM of providing support to the TNV and unleashing a reign of terror in the name of TNV attacks. The CPM points out that the former deputy chief minister, Mr Dasarath Deb, is the prime target of the TNV and that he has to be provided special protection after two serious attempts on his life. The TNV has accused Mr Deb of collaborating with a party and government which seeks to annihilate the tribals.

Part of the reason for the defeat of the Left Front lies in all these contradictions. In the towns and among the non-tribal middle class the CPM is accused of having poured funds into the tribal areas, ignoring the claims of the Bengalis. The enthusiastic response to the declaration of the whole state as a disturbed area reflected the insecurity among the affluent sections in the face of TNV threats of increased violence if tribals dared to participate in the elections.

The Congress was seen by the CPM as the party which was prepared to take on the TNV. The CPM was only prepared to take the softer option of politically containing the tribal situation by using minimum force. The Bengali population in Tripura to a large extent believed that the CPM was prepared to tolerate the TNV insurgency for the sake of votes.

The Congress helped foster this impression by repeating that Mr Hrangkhal was captured and it was due to the lack of sufficient police security around him that he could escape or was kidnaped by rival TNV groups. The Congress also played on the people's sentiments by pointing out that Mr Chakraborty had refused to increase the strength of the paramilitary forces in the state even though the Union home minister, Mr Buta Singh, had offered additional security forces.

The CPM also committed a mistake in extending support to Mr Babrata Kalai, who contested the election as an independent candidate. Mr Kalai is a surrendered TNV insurgent. The party thereby played into the hands of the Congress, which cited it as an instance to prove the TNV-CPM links.

Minister Blames CPI-M

46001306 Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English
12 Feb 88 p 12

[Text] Calcutta, February 11—Mr Santosh Mohan Deb, Union minister of state for telecommunications, said here today that Gana Mukti Parishad, an underground

wing of the CPI(M) in Tripura, and not the TNV was responsible for a number of killings in the state on the eve of the Assembly elections. "We have already begun to take action against the culprits and the cat will soon be out of the bag," he observed.

Mr Deb told newsmen at the WBPCCI headquarters that a number of people were killed at Khayerpur and suburbs of Agartala on the eve of the election. "Although the Left Front government had blamed the TNV for these murders, it has now been established that CPI(M) workers were responsible," he said.

Asked whether he favoured the idea of opening a dialogue with the TNV to put an end to insurgency, Mr Deb said there was no question of any talks with the TNV as long as they continued killings and refused to surrender. The Prime Minister had stated in Nagaland that the government was prepared to talk with the rebels if they accepted the Constitution of India. As far as the TNV is concerned, the Prime Minister has vowed to finish them. The present chief minister is now extending his full support to the security forces for this purpose, he said.

Asked why the CPI(M)-led government had failed to stop the insurgency, Mr Deb said the government did not have an intelligence network. "There was no allocation in the budget for intelligence work. Now we are building the intelligence," he said. He asserted that the Army or the task force would remain in Tripura as long as the TNV menace was there.

About reports on the flouting of election rules during the declaration of results of the Majilishpur seat, Mr Deb said, "My MLA's certificate is in my hand. Let them go to the court." He said he did not want to comment on the chief election commissioner's observation merely on the basis of press reports. He described as "totally false" the CPI(M)'s assertion that recounting was allowed only when the Congress(I) asked for it. "For instance, our demand for recounting of votes in Teliamura and Chhmanu was rejected," he said.

Mr Deb charged the chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, and the former Tripura chief minister, Mr Nripen Chakraborty, with misleading the people about the deployment of the army to help the Congress(I) in the elections. "The Army was nowhere near the booths on the election day. It is also wrong to assume that the army was deployed at the behest of the Tripura Congress(I) just before the election. The Congress(I) there was demanding deployment of the army for the last two years since the state government had failed to deal with insurgents," he observed.

Mr Deb also denied the CPI(M)'s charge that the Army was deployed in Tripura without the state government's consent. "Earlier, Mr Chakraborty and the Union home minister, Mr Buta Singh, had agreed to the deployment

of a task force to meet the insurgency. The task force was later defined at a meeting between the state's chief secretary and other high officials," he asserted.

About the reported threats made by Union ministers to officers in Tripura, Mr Deb said, "A lady told me she had been raped and sought my protection. When I met the concerned OC and later the SP, both of them pleaded their helplessness. When I mentioned this incident in a public speech, Mr Chakraborty complained to the Prime Minister saying I was interfering with the administration. Do you think I was wrong?"

Mr Deb also hinted that the Tripura ministry might be expanded in the near future, "but not immediately."

Mr Deb said "one can not expect a free and fair election in any state in which the CPI(M) is in power."

Mr Deb made this comment when a newsman asked him whether the ensuing panchayat election in West Bengal would be free and fair. Referring to Mr Nripen Chakraborty's assertion that the Congress(I) had resorted to unfair means to win the Tripura polls, Mr Deb said, "Mr Chakraborty had congratulated the people of Tripura at the initial stage of counting, but later he changed his contention when reports of the defeat of CPI(M) nominees reached him."

Asked about the WBPCCI's demand for deployment of the BSF and CRPF in West Bengal to ensure a free and fair election, Mr Deb said there was nothing wrong in the deployment of paramilitary forces to ensure a peaceful election. "This has been done earlier in other states," he said.

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Former Actor Forms New Party in Tamil Nadu
46001305 Madras THE HINDU in English
11 Feb 88 p 3

[Text] Mr. Sivaji Ganesan, cine actor, who recently resigned from the Congress (I) today announced the formation of a new party "Tamizhaga Munnetra Mun-nani" (Tamil Nadu Progressive Front).

Launching the party before a gathering of his admirers and fans from all the districts in front of his residence in Boag Road, T'Nagar, Mr. Ganesan recalled how he and his countless fans had continued to serve the Congress (I) with total dedication in spite of humiliation, insults and slights at the hands of Congressmen in the last quarter century.

Only when all those who used him and his fans as a ladder to power, began to stab them in the back, they realised the futility of continuing in the Congress (I). The decision to pull down the Janaki Ramachandran Ministry was too much to bear. He and his fans revolted when the Congress (I) which had the tradition of honouring the

plighted word trampled it. For raising their voice, four MLAs were assaulted in the floor of the Tamil Nadu Assembly on January 28 on the eve of the confidence vote sought by the Janaki Ramachandran Ministry. "We realised that their aim was to eliminate us and there was no use in continuing in the Congress (I). We decided to come out." Was it wrong? he asked amidst cries of "No..No" from the gathering.

Concluding his ten-minute speech, Mr. Sivaji Ganesan said there would not have been a necessity to form the new party if MGR had been alive today. He and his fans had been forced to face a new political situation threatening like a tornado which had to be met to protect the interests of the Tamil community.

Aims: Elaborating the ideals and objectives of his new party, he said it would strive for an egalitarian society, work towards the further enrichment and advancement of the rich and traditional Tamil language and culture, promote national integration and protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation, fight for and preserve socialism, federalism, secularism and parliamentary democracy and promote the welfare of the downtrodden, oppressed and depressed classes.

Interests of Tamils: The party would also shun violence at every stage of human endeavor, evolve meaningful schemes to raise the living standards of the urban and rural poor and protect the interests of the Tamils living abroad, promote the rights of the working class, relentlessly fight against social discrimination of all sorts particularly untouchability and struggle against all social evils like dowry and sati and to strive to provide equal opportunities to the women folk in all fields in tune with the present set up in advanced countries, he said.

Mr. Ganesan said the new party's flag would be in white and red colour—white symbolising purity, truth and peace, and the red denoting toil, sacrifice and awakening.

Earlier, the name of Mr. Sivaji Ganesan for the Presidentship of the new party was proposed by Mr. Thalapathi Shanmugham, President of the all India Sivaji

Ganesan Fans' Association, and it was seconded and supported by the four MLAs who resigned from the Congress (I)—Messrs. E.V.K.S. Elangovan, T.R. Venkataramanan, V.G. Chellappa and K. Sornalingam—and Presidents of the various district Associations of Sivaji Fans' Associations in the State and also from Pondicherry and Karnataka.

Cries of "Tamizhaga Mudalvar Vazhga" "Makkal Thalaivar Vazhga" rent the air when Mr. Ganesan unfurled the white and red flag on the lawns of his residence.

Later Mr. Ganesan paid homage at the Rajaji and Kamaraj memorials at Guindy, placed wreaths on the samadhis of E.V. Ramaswami, C.N. Annadurai and M.G. Ramachandran.

A huge pandal was put up in front of his residence to accommodate his fans and admirers who began streaming in right from the morning to garland him and hail his decision to form a new party.

An adept in dialogue delivery in the film world, Mr. Sivaji Ganesan justified his reading out a statement announcing the launching of the new party.

"The speech preceding the birth of the party should be done lispingly but must be devoid of shortcomings. Elders in politics will be watching us. The media also can be prevented from misquoting me in any way", he said.

Since 12-1:30 p.m. was 'Raghu Kalam' on Wednesday, the function began around 1:45 p.m. While some of the district secretaries of Sivaji Fans Associations, while seconding his name for the presidentship of the new party, hailed him as the future Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, others honoured him with the title of "Makkal Thalaivar".

It was 2:20 p.m. when Mr. Ganesan announced the name of the party and displayed its white and red coloured flag to wild cheers from his fans.

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